

FRED SCHODT • ANIMATED CLASSICS • U.S. CON REPORT

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PRIVATE COMPANY
YUUGEN KAISHA



From the creators of UROTUKIDOJI

EPISODE 1

Adventure Kid



ANIME UK MAGAZINE

FRONT COVER: YUUGEN KAISHA
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VOL 3 • NO 4

JANE MOIR Administrator

has just come back from Majorca with a twinkle in her eye - and no suntan...



HELEN McCARTHY Editor

has just come back from California, walking on air - Mickey Mouse kissed her hand...



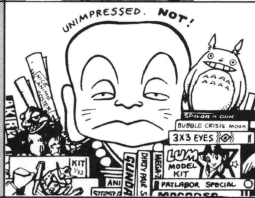
JOHN SPENCER Designer

has just come back from an afternoon in Hackney, but like the beer, he's not bitter...



STEVE KYTE Staff Artist

has just got back from California, too, but one dealers room looks much like any other dealers room...



PETER GOLL Publisher

has returned from California after finding most Americans use the bar for Mineral Water



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Spongley's Second Law of Thermodynamics:
Entropy tends to a maximum
(unless you're heating milk in a saucepan...)

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KONNICHIWA!

Steve, Peter and I got back from ANIME EXPO literally days before this issue went to press, but we've still managed to bring you a report on our three funpacked and wildly expensive days at the convention plus a Retail Roundup report on some new US anime sources. (The dealer's room was to die for and we are now broke for the foreseeable future.) Apart from Doing Anime, we saw THE LION KING (pretty, but Studio Ghibli would have done it better, I think) and went to Disneyland to enjoy the contrast of riding King Arthur's Carousel outside Sleeping Beauty's Castle followed immediately by a trip to the moon of Endor with George Lucas's STAR TOURS.

Our man in Tokyo, Sakura Studio's Peter Evans, has been working while we've been playing, so when those nice people at Sony Music Entertainment promised to send him some news and pictures on their new series YUUGEN KAISHA, how could he resist passing it on to you? Don't feel too sorry for him, though his idea of "work" is watching new anime and going to live shows to meet the seiyuu* superstars in the flesh!

Much to my regret, we can't bring you our promised feature on CYBER CITY OEDO 808. This is one of my personal favourite OAV series and I'm really looking forward to sharing my enjoyment with you, but unfortunately we've had difficulty in acquiring illustrations, and given the pressure on space caused by the delightful but unexpected extras cited above, we've decided to hold the CYBER CITY feature until a later date.

That won't be as far off as usual, because my big news, which I've saved for last, is that as soon as we can complete the arrangements, ANIME UK MAGAZINE is going monthly! There'll also be a reduction in cover price and an increase in page count. You won't lose any of the features you enjoy, but you'll gain some exciting new ones and more, better, faster anime and manga news!

Yours animatedly,

Helen McCarthy
Editor

*voice actors

Featured characters:
Sailor Moon © Naoko Takeuchi/TV Asahi/Toei
Chibi Maruko-chan © Sakura Momoko/Chokkan/
Nippon Animation
Dr Slump © Akira Toriyama/Bird Studio/Toei/Fuji TV/
Shueisha
Urusei Yatsura © Rumiko Takahashi/Shogakkan/Kitty
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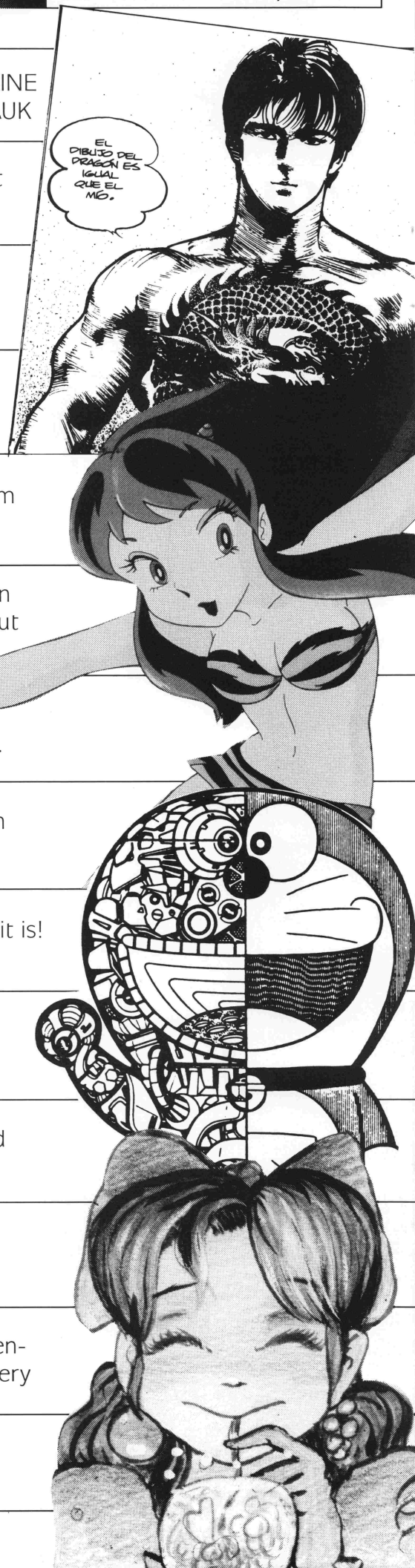
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NEWSLINE

ORIGINAL ARTWORK

ROBOTECH fans already enjoying KISEKI'S release of CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS (or is it? - see our review!) have a chance to acquire some of the original artwork from the US comics drawn by the Waltrip brothers and published by Eternity. John and Jason Waltrip are selling pages of their original art from the ROBOTECH comicbooks at very reasonable prices. To find out what's still available and how to order, send a self-addressed envelope and two IRCs to Jason Waltrip / John Waltrip, PO Box 412, Toano, VA 23168, USA

The **CARTOON/FANTASY ORGANIZATION** is planning its 1995 DIRECTORY OF ANIME FANDOM and welcomes entries from fans all over the world. The Directory will be an aid to communication, correspondence and information on anime fans, collectors, clubs and BBS. There is a very modest charge for each entry (USA \$1 before Sept 30 1994, rest of world contact the address below for information) and you'll receive a copy of the directory when it is complete, at the end of 1994. Contact **CARTOON/FANTASY ORGANIZATION**, 1995 ANIME DIRECTORY, c/o FRED PATTEN, 11863 W, Jefferson Blvd #1, Culver City, CA 90230-6322, USA.

FRENCH LESSONS

Katsura Masakazu's manga VIDEO GIRL AI has been translated into French, flipped and relettered by EDITIONS TONKAM as their first manga project. Pocketbook sized and popularly priced at 30 francs (around £3.75), this

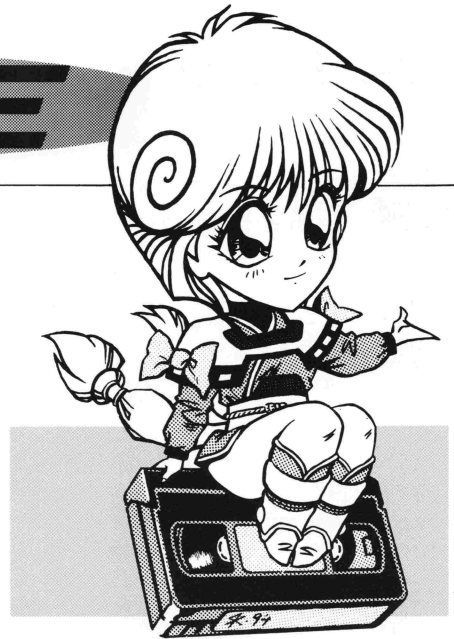
attractive little volume is the first in a series which is sure to be popular. 197 pages of the gorgeous Ai Amano, Moteuchi, Takashi and Moemi-chan, superb artwork and a charming story of teen angst and romance can be yours by writing for ordering information to EDITIONS TONKAM at 29, Rue Keller, 75011 Paris, France
VIDEO GIRL AI VOLUME 1, ISBN 2-910645-010 (series ISBN 2-910645-002), 197pp, © 1989 Katsura/Shueisha, French translation © 1994 TONKAM, 30FF

US EXTRAVAGANZA SUBSCRIBER PRIZE DRAW!

Once again, we've brought back goodies from our unexpected trip to America, and once again we're making sure our subscribers get a share! We have a whole pile of goodies ranging from ANIME EXPO books and t-shirts, ORGUSS 2 and MACROSS PLUS badges, a KO CENTURY BEAST WARRIORS acetate, and more. We also have a choice GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH cel generously donated by ANIMEIGO's Robert Woodhead. The cel is a real stunner (as you can see) but even if you're not lucky enough to win this, there are plenty of goodies on offer. If you're on our subscribers list by 31st August 1994, the date of the draw, you don't have to do a thing to be in with a chance of winning either the cel or one of the smaller prizes. So **SUBSCRIBE TODAY**. There's a form on page 7; just photocopy it if you don't want to cut your magazine.

ADVENTURE WHO?

Political Correctness has hit the BBFVC with all the



Video Girl Ai © Masakazu Katsura/Shueisha

force of a David Alton amendment. KISEKI FILMS have just been informed that they can't call ADVENTURE KID by that title because - yes, you guessed - it's an 18 cert film and the word KID in the title might mislead parents into thinking it's suitable for children. (The figure 18 on the sleeve might be held to contradict this, but there you go ...) Kiseki faxed a list of possible titles and the only ones acceptable to the BBFVC were ADVENTURE PAIR and ADVENTURE DUO.

MADE IN HONG KONG

If one thing distinguishes anime aficionados from other fans, it's a strong appreciation of visual style. Some of the most stylish movies around these days are coming out of Hong Kong, especially for fans of the more action orientated anime. Now you can get them over here - new label Made in Hong Kong launched at the beginning of June with four classic titles: SAVIOUR OF THE SOUL, THE KILLER, GOD OF GAMBLERS, and THE BAREFOOT KID. You should be able to get these from your local video store / library, or Made In Hong Kong, 231 Portobello Road, London W11.1LT.

Gaiarth © Toshiba EMI/Artrmic



ROBOPHILE CORNER

VICTORY GUNDAM has now, sadly, finished. In its place there is an impostor, GGUNDAM. "Gundam the Gundam" is set in the Golden Era of the Stereotype : FC.55. (This means nothing to me. I like Cute, not robots. Cute robots are okay I suppose.) Every 4 years the colonies send their best fighters down onto the ruins of the Earth to fight for the right to be Number 1 for the next 4. Rather like the Olympics only more detrimental to the scenery. This is tournament number 13 and some of those Mobile Fighters look really foolish.

This sad attempt at merchandising disguised as anime does have a few plus points (besides the cool toys). The fighting method, involving a virtual reality chamber inside the MF, is very well depicted.

You are also guaranteed a naked man on every episode! Before you ring up your MP or Mayor to complain, this is entirely acceptable on Japanese TV. As long as they do not show genitalia, they can show naked men and women to the children without any of that wasteful worrying about easily offended old women and the Politically-Correct crusaders. The hero is, predictably, Domon Kasshu of Neo-Japan. His magic attack is the Shining Finger of the opening theme. As to what, exactly, that is ... why not watch it and see?

This is not to say that I don't like it. The Japanese is really simple to understand and so is the plot. It's a nice way to start to use your beginner's level Nihongo!

Below is the SAKURA STUDIO quick guide to GG. You may now laugh at the stereotypes. Luckily none of them are particularly offensive, just very simple.

While on the subject, two other shows currently airing are RED BARON, featuring a robot called Robby and is aimed at a younger audience, and RYUKNIGHT, from the same stable as LAMUNE & 40. This is aimed at the kind of people that like to see blue-haired princesses running around the world trying to reach a sword several miles high. As it is better made than GG and has a more comic touch to it. All the power armour seems to be semi-sentient and/or magical. It is easy to spot, look for SD robots stomping around the land of Westguns. I would recommend this over the other two, even though it is aimed at a younger audience. If you want to see some real robo-rubbish, then take a look at JAY DECKER, the replacement for THE BRAVE EXPRESS MIGHT-GAINE. The latter was full of transforming trains, this is full of sentient transforming vehicles. Perhaps it is TRANSFORMERS '94. I sincerely hope not.

A new season and a new location for our STUDIO HELL CITY scribe - PETER EVANS is now working from SAKURA STUDIO at 5-3-5C Hosoyama, Asao-ku, Kawasakishi, Japan 215. This article is © 1994 Peter Evans/Sakura Studio and may not be copied by any means in whole or in part without the permission of the author.

SUMMER CUTENESS WARNING

Greetings. Summer is coming. You can tell. All sorts of cuteness is being unleashed on the readers of esteemed magazines such as NewType, Animage, Animedia, Anime-V and ANIME UK.

Nowhere is safe from the likes of SAILOR MOON and AKAZUKIN CHACHA. This month's hottest topics are the new GUNDAM : Is GUNDAM spelled "travesty" or is it really GUNDAM? Who knows? I watch it, it's very easy to understand.

The other thing that has so far sold over 280,000 copies is something about CUTE in levels that the gaijins could not possibly comprehend -

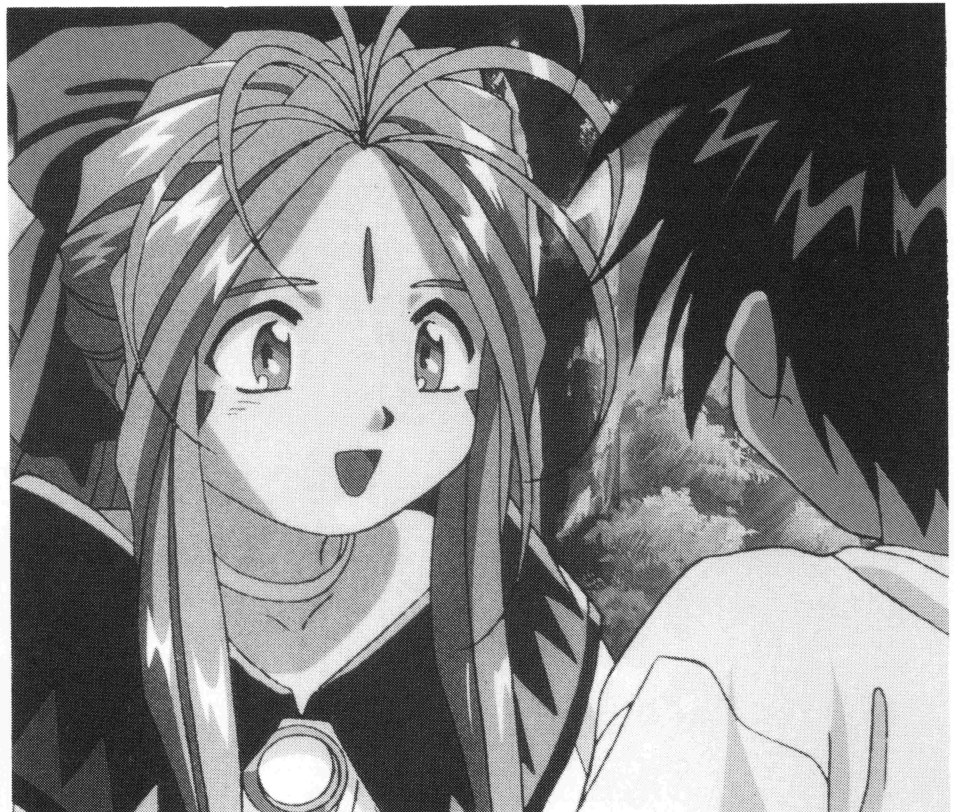
SAKURA STUDIO EXCLUSIVE - AA MEGAMISAMA LIVE!

On March 27 they recorded the voice track for part 5. Some interesting people were there, besides the seiyuu (*voice artists) - Gouda Hiroyuki and Fujishima Kosuke for example. What follows is a very liberal translation of the interview. (many thanks to my interpreter Hitoshi Doi.)

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FINAL EPISODE?

Fujishima Kosuke (author) I wrote some of the lines myself, I felt that this one can really make you cry. When the voices are put to it, I think it will be very emotional. I am looking forward to it.

Gouda Hiroyuki (director) When I first looked at it, I had some images of what I wanted to do. A lot of them really happened, so I am very satisfied with it. Please look forward to the results.



An My Goddess © Fujishima Kosuke/Kodansha/TBS/KSS

Gundam	Country	Pilot	Character	Description
Shining	Neo Japan	Domon Kasshu	Classic samurai attitude in modern guise. He is searching for his older brother, who is lost somewhere on Earth. Long black hair and red cloak. Followed around by the rather attractive heroine, Rain Mikamura.	Looks like a Gundam should, large red and white shoulder pads, blue bodywork. Transforms between 3 modes: normal, battle and super. Looks cool in all of them.
Neros	Neo Italy	Michelo	Ep 1, Rome. Long red mohican, hard drinking low-life. This Mafia Boss is not a nice man. Nor a particularly sane or competent one. LOSE.	Gundammy. Ugly thing that deserved to lose. It has been a long time since I saw this episode.
Maxter	Neo America	Chibodee Crocket	Ep 2, New York. A super boxer, with 100 knock-outs to his credit, an all-round nice guy, lacking only a racoon sitting on his head. The government try to cheat, but he prevents them. DRAW.	Red body and shoulder pads, boxing gloves and a side-arm!
Dragon	Neo China	Sai Saishi	Ep 3, China? A teenage boy with a long black pony-tail, well versed in martial arts. Tricks Domon into taking him to his Gundam. DRAW.	Green body with yellow trim. Pony-tail weapon and dragon mitten!
Rose	Neo France	George de Sand	Ep 4, long red hair.	White with blue trim. Epaulettes, a cloak, tricorn and epee.
Bolt	Neo Russia	Argo Gulskaa	Ep 5, busy eyebrows. Russian Army great-coat.	Dark grey-blue. Looks like a Russian soldier in The Great War.

Asami Junko (Sayoko) When I saw the pictures, I was supposed to be checking it for my role, but I just watched it. I was very moved by it. This time, I am not doing Sayoko, but the store clerk. I am very happy to be part of this final episode. Thank you very much.

Inoue Kikuko (Belldandy) Speaking from here? Ventriloquism ... [Touma Yumi was sitting on her lap!] When I read the script I thought it was great. It's really worth the months of waiting. Lots of tears welled up just reading the script. When I saw the pictures today, there was another surge of tears. When I saw the pictures today, there was another surge of tears. So I wanted to go something better than everyone's expectations. The script and pictures are wonderful, so I want to do my best.

Kikuchi Masami (Keiichi) In the previous episode, the situation changed drastically and Keiichi was starting to panic. In this, where Keiichi works very hard at many part-time jobs, I think the female fans will think it is great. It's good just watching the pictures, so I have to try hard to do a good job myself. Everyone, please look forward to it.

Touma Yumi (Urd, young Belldandy) This time the parts that will make you cry are done by Bell-chan and Keiichi. So Urd and Skuld are in a position to add to the atmosphere. I think this is the first episode where you can really see Urd as the older sister, one you can depend on. I'm happy that I got to say lots of magic spells.

Hisakawa Aya (Skuld) As everyone said, the story is very good. This is a very serious story, so the comical parts are given to Skuld. The facial expressions such as anger and crying were very good.

Ogata Megumi (Young Keiichi) I'm very nervous about having to do the final part after everyone has done such a great job so far. I just came, so I didn't know about the art or manga. I had been reading Morning (phone-book weekly manga) so I liked TAIHO a lot. (TAIHO! SHICHAUZO!) But I had never read AA MEGAMISAMA, so when I got the part, I ran over to a friend's house to read it. I'm sorry I haven't seen the video, but the manga is very good. I want to try my best in this final episode.

ANY "CATCH PHRASES" FOR THIS EPISODE?

Fujishima : Get three buckets before watching this. [Meaning that it really will make you cry. He's right too.]

Inoue : Would you like to swim in an ocean of tears? [But she was too shy, so she asked Touma Yumi to say it instead.]

© 吉岡平 / 角川書店・タイラープロジェクト



MAGICAL GALS

If you drooled at the thought of all that mecha running around, stop now. This next section is all about girls, the distaff side. It is not for you!

BISHOJI SENSHI SAILOR MOON

SAILOR MOON is Bandai's cash cow. It is mind numbingly popular and has enabled them to buy a controlling interest in SUNRISE! This is a story of 3 girls who fight evil. No, that was at the beginning, SAILOR MOON, then there were 5, SAILOR MOON R. Now, in its latest incarnation, SAILOR MOON S, there are 7.

The new Senshi are Sailor Uranus (tall, short blonde hair) Tennou Haruka and SAILOR NEPTUNE (slightly shorter with collar length green hair) Kaiou Michiru. Haruka is frequently mistaken for a boy, not helped by the way he dresses! This has many comical side-effects, such as Rei-chan falling madly in love with him, or her ... I almost forgot to mention the mad professor, played by Kamiya Akira. (Saeba Ryo from CITY HUNTER is perhaps his most famous role.)

MARMALADE BOY is on at the unlikely time of 8.30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. It is a slice of high school life, completely magic free, but very shojo. All about young love and girls getting in a terrible tizzy about their first kiss. It looks like a love-dodecahedron! This is pleasant viewing, but what a time!

The other magical girl show worth mentioning is **AKAZUKIN CHACHA**. If you think "Little Red Riding Hood" you won't be far off the mark. Of course, she never spoke Japanese, lived with a wizard, went to magic school, transformed into a magical princess or had a magic bow and arrow set ... **AKAZUKIN CHACHA** is, to put it mildly, manic. It is very cute and entertaining. Watch it and see for yourself. But be warned, it is very, very CUTE!!

METAL FIGHTER (star) MIKU

Four 16-year-olds in power armour, Ginko, Sayaka, Nana and Miku! Neo-Pro Wrestlers! It makes one wonder what is going on ... on tv in July.

OAV WA NAN DESU KA

That's just the tv though. There are a few interesting OAV series coming out as well. Here is a very brief overview of some thing to look forward to:

TAIHO! SHICHAUZO!

In English, "You are under arrest". This is Fujishima Kosuke's previous work, a story about two cute police girls, Miyuki and Natsumi. It is being directed by Furuhashi Kazuhiro and will be released by Bandai Visual

IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER

2 OAVs. The first one may be called "Azalyn's Holiday". October and November respectively. Lots of talent and a power-up cast from the original TV. All the crew will be back in this Space Opera with a difference. If you don't know what it's about, there are 26 episodes of the tv series available on LD, 5 CDs and a CDsingle, loaded with in-jokes and comic moments. The sixth music file is a double CD Drama featuring DJ Dom (Ralgon Empire) KICA-197-8

NEW VOTOMS

Half-man, half-machine, all warrior. Haircuts straight out of the Gerry Anderson liveaction series UFO. Armour suits called ScopeDogs, but beyond that is a mystery to me. Part 2 in May.



TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI

Just when you thought it was safe to put your sense of humour back in the jar beside the bed, the second series is scheduled to start in late September with "Konnichiwa Aka-chan" (Good morning baby). Whose baby/ Wait and see ... a close parallel with MEN AND A BABY here. Part 9 (2) is titled "Sasami & Tsunami" which explains why a cute little alien girl just happens to have thmost powerful ship in existence. Number 10 "Tenchi Suki!" is all about rabbits and why they turn into spaceships. (Do not feed after midnight?) Ryo-oh-ki turns into human form! There is also talk of TENCHIMUYO! TV but that is just 99% certain at the moment- 26 episodes starting in October on TV Tokyo, featuring all the same cast as before in a new expanded storyline by the author of the CD Drama. Poor Chisa Yokoyama wil have to come back from her English studies in Australia.

GPX CYBER FORMULA ZERO

Boys' racing anime. 8 OAVs, 2 out now, third due in late July. All the fun of the circuit, complete with the high mach numbers they don't allow in the real thing. All the heroes are too young to be sleeping with the heroines, who are also too young.

BLUE SKY GIRL PILOTS?

Hmm, it looks like SUPER CAT GIRL NUKUNUKU because the character designer is the same. A 3 part series about 4 pilot trainees. TOP GUN anyone?

SUPER CAT-GIRL NUKUNUKU 6. TORI-AEZU FINAL.

The best Cute-Robots anime in a long, long time. either a happy ending, or Tokyo is razed to the ground and a happy ending. I think the UK release is being cut. That's rough, and sort of bizarre on such an innocuous title.

CRUSHER POLICE DOMINION

6 OAVs, part 4 due out soon. While Godzilla is busy flattening Tokyo and Yokohama with his buddies Mecha-Ghidora and Mothra, the Tank Police are doing the same for Osaka. This is the second DOMINION series and in my opinion a lot better. Little bits of comic mastery tucked away between the action and intrigue.

MOVIES**HEISEI TANUKI KASSEN PONPOKO (PON-POKO for short)**

The brave, magical tanuki (raccoons) fight to protect their way of life from the humans. They can take on human form to do so. Roadshow in July. (Roadshow or ロ-ドショ- is what the Japanese call a cinematic release.) A movie from Studio Ghibli (directed by Takahata - the next Miyazaki movie is due out next year). It has voice actor Kamiya Akira!

Also out in the summer holidays are the movies of the video games GAROH DENSETSU (WORLD HEROES) and SUTOTSU (STREET FIGHTER II).

NEXT ISSUE : another SAKURA STUDIO super-report, this time by HITOSHI DOI who, recovered from his near-death experience with Goddesses, bravely ventured into the realms of demons for the MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 5 event interview ...

After the session ended, the voice actors went to eat bento in the second floor lobby. I persuaded my hapless interpreter to go and speak to Fujishima Kosuke. [It's a wellknown fact that Hitoshi Doi's brain stops if he talks to goddesses. He goes rigid with fear within ten feet and barely survived this whole interview.] We had a question we wanted the definitive answer to

AH, OH, EE-BAH-GHUM MY GODDESS?

Doi : It seems that there is going to be an English version of the MEGAMISAMA manga coming out ...

Fujishima : Yes, it's being worked on.

Doi : The title seems to have changed from AH MY GODDESS to OH MY GODDESS. What are your feelings on that?

Fujishima : Yes. I think it is best to use the one so that the meaning will be correct and will be understood correctly by the people of that country. So it doesn't have to be 'Ah'. If I am not mistaken, it has been decided that it will be 'Oh'?

Doi : Yes

Fujishima : Since they saw 'Oh' as closer to the meaning, it became 'Oh'. How is it? Which is the more correct meaning?

Doi : Either way is fine... Maybe with 'Oh' there is a feeling of surprise.

Another point is that the Japanese anime and goods already use the name 'Ah'.

Fujishima : So the Japanese things have already been released over there?

Doi : Yes. Since that's written as 'Ah', when people see 'Oh' they ask if it's the same thing.

Fujishima : I was a little careless.

Doi : If the name is kept the same, it can have the same name all over the world.

Fujishima. Indeed. I wonder if it has been finalized. I'll think about it. If it can still be fixed ...

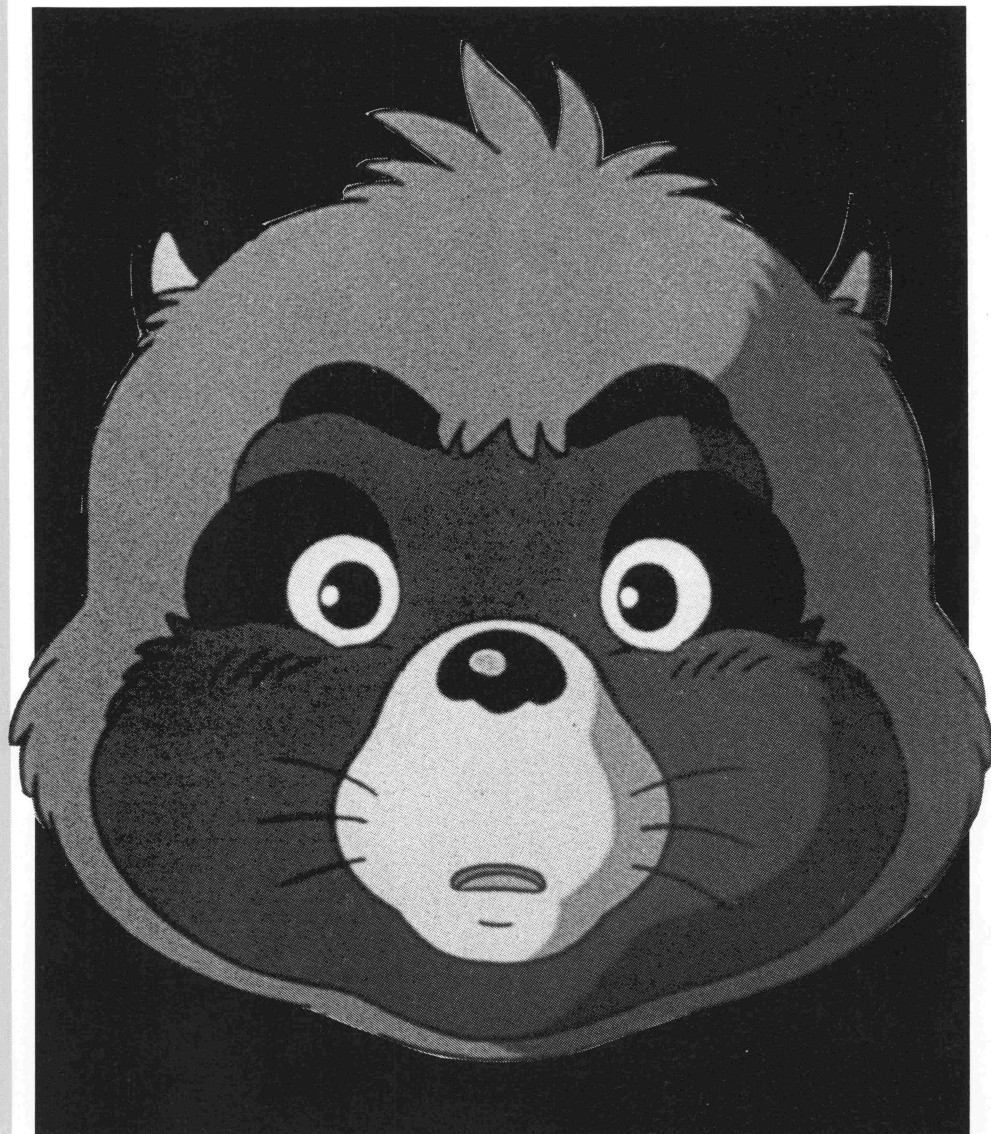
Doi : Well, among the translators there are those who say 'Oh' is correct.

Fujishima : BUT if we want compatibility, it should be 'Ah'.

Doi : Yes.

26th April 1994 A friend of mine in Kodansha very kindly sent me a fax. It was an invitation to a party to celebrate the completion of AH MY GODDESS. The staff, cast and some Press people were invited. The party was held in a club called "Titty Boo" in Shibuya. Not only did I take my stunt-interpreter Hitoshi Doi, but also my better half, Kiyomi. A fun time was had by all; poor Hitoshi's feet never quite touched the ground again.

Enough of the exclusive English report, you can't possibly be interested! What you are interested in is news, right?



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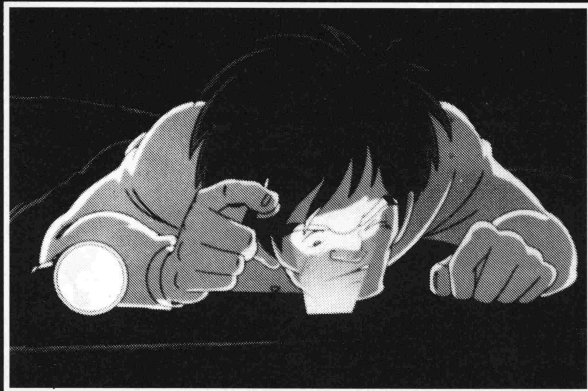
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The Japanese have a great tradition of noble defeat, one does not necessarily have to be the victor to become a heroic figure. The Animated Classics of Japanese



Literature (ACJL) series, currently on release from Central Park Media, is a brave move by both the Japanese production company and by the American distrib-



utors, although both of them probably realise that their venture was doomed to failure from the start. However, as many Japanese would say, even attempting such an endeavour is a victory in itself. There are virtues and vices within the ACJL project, stemming from both the Japanese and American ends. The Japanese producers have been conservative in their selection and animation, while Central Park Media seem unsure as to whom should be their target market. The series seems to have been made primarily with young Japanese children in mind, and this has had some effect on both what has been chosen, and the method in which it has been presented. The whole package has been aimed more at institutional buyers than individual consumers, with discounts for purchasers of the entire fifteen volume set. The emphasis is clearly on educational

purposes, and the need to woo the teachers rather than the taught means that the definition of classic is skewed towards the traditional. After all, to the older generation in Japan, literature and anime are mutually exclusive genres.

Literature is what the youngsters SHOULD be reading, while anime is the trash that they invariably prefer.

Someone has obviously hit upon the idea of presenting the set books of the Japanese school curriculum in a way that might be more appealing to the

youth of today, and no doubt a few more kids will get

through the literature multiple choice exam as a result of having seen some of these pieces. They are unlikely, however, to turn to the original books, and their teachers are unlikely to be so impressed with the anime that they decide to investigate further. So, what we end up with is 'edutainment', with all the necessary alterations. This means that we get an exact reading of each story's opening line, since that is likely to turn up on the exam paper. However, the rest of the story is likely to be cut down to fit into the requisite number of minutes, so that the viewer sees just enough to get a general idea. And general is the word: in Mori Ogai's *DANCING GIRL*, the plot has even been changed to avoid offending younger viewers. The story of

the doomed love affair between a Japanese man and a German woman has been nicely sanitised by omitting the original reason for the characters' first meeting. Whereas in the original tale, Elise was weeping because she would have to sleep with her dancing instructor in order to pay for her father's funeral, no mention of this is made in the ACJL version. While it would not have been possible to recreate such tales in their entirety, such censorship reduces the educational value of the ACJL series, especially to its Western audience, which is likely to be double the age of the original Japanese target market, subtitle-literate and bookish.

Central Park Media are also pushing ACJL at institutions in America, where the value of the series is considerable. Not only does it give a basic, if perhaps too basic, introduction to many famous Japanese

works, it also presents many titles which are as-yet unavailable in English in their original printed form. Add the subtitles for a bit of extra Japanese practice, and one could see the ACJL series making considerable inroads into the Japanese studies market in America, as long as the staff were prepared to let it.

However, its value to the anime fan is less guaranteed. Like many attempts to teach the right sort of thing to the right sort of people, the ACJL suffers from lack of interest in the production side. Nippon Animation have embarked upon a very worthy venture, but animation has been of

THE NOBILITY OF FAILURE *Animated*

by Jonathan Clements

OF JAP

secondary consideration in their work. Few 'classic' Japanese stories make for good anime, they simply lack the action. The extant version of *THE SENSUALIST* (not part of the ACJL series) is a good example of how anime can bring a striking visual emphasis to a work, but none of that is evident from ACJL. The animation is very much a run-of-the-mill representation of scenes from the books, they may be animated classics, but they will never be classic anime. This is a symptom of the ACJL's attempt to appeal



to teachers rather than students. The same Japanese kids who will daydream their way through a literature class will be rushing home to watch *HAKKENDEN*, which is also an adaptation of a 'classic', but one that has been made specifically with the young audience in mind. One of the best visual adaptations of the last book of Homer's *ODYSSEY* can be seen in the time-



travel episode of ULYSSES 31, which is both exciting and a surprisingly faithful rendition of the story. It is certainly closer to Homer than the ACJL's DANCING GIRL is to Mori Ogai. But the children are not likely to be the ones who buy the ACJL series, and so its animation is much more reverent and dry; if it looks too good, it can't be educational, can it? Wisely, many of the adaptations in the ACJL are of short stories, which lend themselves much better to quick summary. Some condensations of novels, however, have been savagely cut. Ozaki Shiro's THEATRE OF LIFE runs to 530 pages in its original Japanese edition, reduced by ACJL to a bit more than half an hour. A

However, none of this is explained in the book or anime, since it would be understood by the Japanese audience. For a Western audience,

AnimEigo-style liner notes might have been a good idea.

There are a few noticeable errors in translation which do not do the ACJL's educational value

OF FERTILITY, which would have made an awesome anime in the SENSUALIST mode, or the haunting RAISIN BREAD, the Mishima release is an anime version of THE SOUND OF WAVES. This harmless, romantic story, which Mishima once called his "joke on the literary establishment", could not be more

UNrepresentative

of his overall canon, and its inclusion in ACJL is bordering on the insulting.

All these things being taken into consideration, the ACJL series is still a worthy attempt at bringing more of Japan to more of us. A few of the anime titles are worth a look, but only for the sake of an interesting story; the actual animation I have seen has little to recommend it. The August batch of releases includes a trio of short stories from Edogawa Rampo, which may lend themselves more readily to the static style of adaptation preferred by ACJL. Mishima's SOUND OF WAVES, despite its wrongful inclusion, is still likely to be a heartwarming

divertimento. Finally, the Spring 1995 release batch contains Tanizaki's TALE OF SHUNKIN, which, if handled properly, could well drag goosebumps of all but the most hard-hearted of horror fans. Central Park Media are to be applauded for this attempt to broaden the appeal and content of anime, but it is unlikely that there are enough Japanese literature buffs in the West to support sales. Anime fans are unlikely to be drawn to the lacklustre animation, although a few of them might develop an interest in the original books. For this reason, it would be a fitting tribute if a few of these titles made their way onto convention video programmes in this country. But these videos are aimed primarily at people who don't like anime, and we all know how boring they are...

*For some reason, the sleeve notes have omitted to mention that Koizumi is not actually a Japanese author, but rather a pseudonym for the gaijin writer Lafcadio Hearn.

Classics

JAPANESE LITERATURE

GHOST STORY by 'Koizumi Yakumo', is in fact only one of the several stories that made up the original book, and pales in



comparison with the live-action version recently released as part of

KWAIDAN by ICA Projects.

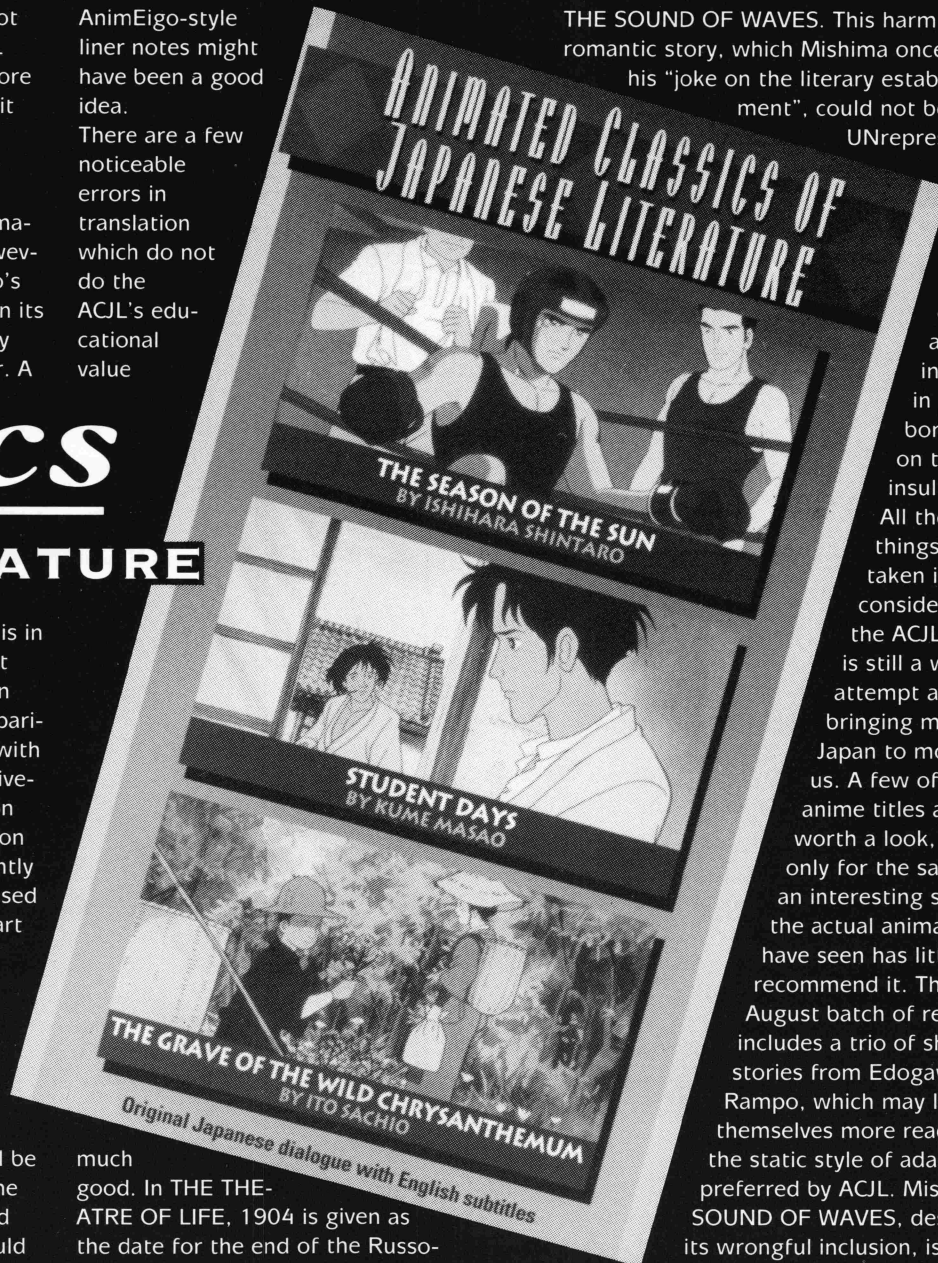
Bearing in mind that the ACJL will be of limited appeal to Western anime fans grown jaded on tentacles and atomics, the English editions should perhaps have tried to be even more scholarly in nature. For example, there are a number of moments in THE IZU DANCER which warrant some form of explanation. When Kaoru offers to play Go with Mizuhara, she actually begins playing Gobang, a childish five-in-a-row variant. In a charming scene, he indulges her not wishing to embarrass her by



telling her she doesn't know how to play properly.



much good. In THE THEATRE OF LIFE, 1904 is given as the date for the end of the Russo-Japanese war, when, as the cover reliably informs us, it was actually 1905. Similarly, in THE DANCING GIRL, Elise is referred to as 'Ellis' throughout. Studio NEMO, America-based translators for Manga Video, seem to be the culprits here, and niggling errors such as these are rather unhelpful and embarrassing. Nippon Animation has committed a few errors of its own in its selection of the stories to be presented. Admittedly, many of them are unquestionably important works, but some authors are conspicuously absent. The nihilist, indeed socialist diatribes of Osamu Dazai, for example, are nowhere to be found. ACJL's definition of a 'classic' seems painfully close to that of our own literature teachers: the author has to be old, preferably dead and, quite literally, unpopular. Mishima would be spinning in his grave if he could see what 'representative work' ACJL had chosen for him. Instead of something like THE SEA



¡anime olé!

A report from Spain

by **Alfons Moline**

While France and Italy are disputing between themselves the title of the European country in which the manga and anime craze is the hottest, Spain can also modestly lay claim to that title. ANIME UK MAGAZINE readers have already read (in number 8 of this magazine) about the manga and anime fan scene in the former countries, but they may also be interested in what Spain has to offer.

Although anime series have been airing on Spanish tv since more than two decades ago, it is only recently that the first Spanish manga and anime fanzines have started spreading all over the country; yet they are growing at an amazing pace, not just in quantity, but also in quality.

Credit for this overnight Japanimation fever should be granted in large part to Akira Toriyama's DRAGON BALL. When Son Gokou's adventures first appeared on tv, no-one suspected what a faithful cult following they would soon develop, not just among kids, but among high-

school and college age groups as well! Once this cult was established, and since no DB tie-in merchandise was available, a traffic of photocopies from the original DB manga was created among Spanish schoolchildren! This was put to an end in the spring of 1992, when together with other DB licensed items, the first issue of the Spanish DRAGON BALL weekly comic hit the newsstands. It is worth noting that the comic is being published simultaneously in Spanish and in Catalan - as

BOLA DE DRAC since DB's popularity is higher in Catalonia, where it is seen on TV3, a TV network which airs in Catalonia's own language, not unlike Wales' S4C, and in fact the Catalan edition outsells that of the rest of the Iberian peninsula!

DB is published by Planeta DeAgostini, also responsible for the Spanish editions of Marvel Superheroes, whose manga line includes titles adapted from the Viz Graphics line (FIST OF THE NORTH STAR, CRYING FREEMAN, MAI, ALITA, SANCTUARY, RANMA 1/3) as well as translations directly from the Japanese (DB itself, SAINT SEIYA, DRAGON QUEST) all of them published in 32-page comic books or 48-page prestiges.

Other Spanish publishers have tried to jump onto the manga bandwagon; thus, the adult monthly EL VIBORA (which, in fact, has pioneered the field by publishing in the early 80s some stories by Yoshihiro Tatsumi) has recently welcomed into its pages GON, the naughty dinosaur created by Masami Tanaka, as well as other more mature-oriented manga features such as Jiroh Taniguchi's THE WALKER or Katsuhiro Otomo's MEMORIES. La Cupula, publishers of EL VIBORA, have also issued a couple of GON paperback volumes. Norma Comics has published some Otomo stories in its monthly magazine CIMOC and has just established its own manga line with DOMINION in prestige format, soon to be followed by VIDEO GIRL AI and SLAM DUNK. The list of publishers of manga in Spain could be rounded off with Ediciones B, who have presented AKIRA adapted from its colour American edition, but they have no plans to launch more manga titles.

All this manga bonanza has led to a plethora of manga and anime fanzines and fan clubs, with titles such as MANGA ZONE, JAPAN ANIME FANCINE (sic), MANGANIME, ANIME BCN, MUNDO ANIMEI (re-sic!), OTAKU PRESS and others, some of which have a near-professional publishing quality. The most original and latest addition is

TSUZU, subtitled "texts about manga", a series of monographic issues with full-colour covers, which are read like a real manga; i.e. it starts at the back cover and is read from right to left, although it is obviously written in

Spanish. No. 1 is dedicated to Toriyama, while No. 2 is a Takahashi special and No. 3 a Shirow special.

Although no convention about manga and anime has so far been organised in Spain, last year's Salon del Comic - which is held every May in Barcelona - had Japan as that year's guest country, with a mammoth manga exhibition and the presence of



Otomo, Tanaka, Ikegami, Taniguchi, Terasawa and others. (1994's edition took place from 5-8 May, the guest country was France.) However British fans who missed this event can still come to Spain on holiday to get acquainted with the manga and anime fandom on this side of the Pyrenees!

As to anime on TV, among many others besides DRAGON BALL we've had DR. SLUMP, ORANGE ROAD, LUM, RANMA 1/2, CITY HUNTER, LUPIN III, MAISON IKKOKU, MAZINGER Z, SAINT SEIYA, DRAGON QUEST, CAPTAIN TSUBASA, NADIA, SAILOR MOON, DORAEMON, etc. Nevertheless, the lack of care of most of our TV networks, which consider these series as "kid stuff", has resulted in them being aired in a really 'dethpicable' (as Daffy Duck would say!) way, by censoring violent scenes, cutting the opening or closing titles and generally placing the shows in dumb kiddie programmes with puerile TV hosts. However, the arrival of the Manga Video label among us since last October has allowed Spanish anime fans to enjoy the titles published under the same label in Britain (yet with some variations - the Spanish version of LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND has been presented in its complete and uncut length!)

Oro Films, the distributor of the Manga Video tapes in Spain, has also created another label, ANIME VIDEO, which will feature material not covered by Manga Video. The first ANIME VIDEO launchings have been the DRAGON BALL movies, and among its other presentations is PORCO ROSSO. Yet another, third, video label has just been created - STRONG VIDEO, which will cover Japanese fantasy or manga-based live action films, similarly to Manga Video U.K.'s Ultra label. Its first tape launched has been Shinya Tsukamoto's TETSUO.

Manga Video has also sponsored a week-long anime festival last December in cinemas

in Barcelona and Madrid - and perhaps later in other Spanish cities too - releasing on the big screen such titles as ROBOT CARNIVAL, LAPUTA: CASTLE IN THE SKY, and of course PORCO ROSSO. The overwhelming success

reason for you animemaniacs to make Spain your next destination. If you are able to meet there some local anime and manga fans, you're sure to get a warm welcome. The 1992 Olympics may be over long ago, but manga and anime are here to stay!

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Following is a list of the key anime and manga fanzines, which may be useful if you want to make contacts in Spain. As there is nearly always someone on the staff who reads English, there should be no language problem.

MANGA ZONE, Musico Barbieri 5-21, 46018 Valencia: 12 issues so far published. Quality has improved highly over the last issues, they now have full colour covers.

TSUZU, Apartado 97018, 08080 Barcelona: three issues published, as described in this article. A goldmine of data in 32 pages.

MUNDO ANIMEI, c/o Carlos Arroyo, Catalanes 19, 08940 Cornellà, Barcelona: one issue published. More amateurishly published (in photocopies) but also loaded with information.

ANIME BCN MAGAZINE, Catalanes 40-1, 08940 Cornellà, Barcelona: two issues published. Is it any coincidence that this fanzine and the previous one are located in the same street of the same town? Anyway the latest issue offers a nice Takahashi dossier. Also photocopied.

OTAKU PRESS, Pelayo 14, 46007 Valencia: two issues published. Nice quality printing, with colour cover. The first issue features a Miyazaki dossier, among other stuff.

JAPAN ANIME FANCINE, c/o Sergio Herrera, Cruz de Conchas 6, 18600 Motril, Granada: 10 issues published. This fast-growing periodical has evolved from a humble photocopied A5 fanzine to a larger and better printed publication. Its publisher has also issued MANGAMANIACOS POWER, a 'fanzine of fanzines' which lists all manga and anime fan publications in Spain.

Una verdadera avalancha con los más arrebatadores e increíbles títulos de la animación japonesa, cuidadosamente seleccionados para tu máximo entretenimiento.

Tras el éxito de AKIRA, y EL PUÑO DE LA ESTRELLA DEL NORTE, crece el fenómeno MANGA.

Año 2010... la tierra está sumergida bajo una gran nube tóxica.

MANGAMANIACOS: Cada película incluye el cupón de inscripción al MANGA CLUB y puntos canjeables por merchandising.

2995 P.P.S. Edición limitada

Comics editados por NORMA EDITORIAL

Aterriza a

DOMINION

TANK POLICE

Ahora en video!!

Doblado al castellano

A partir del 4 de noviembre.

Disponible en los mejores videoclubs, grandes superficies,

Empieza ahora tu colección de los largometrajes

DRAGON BALL

LAS PELICULAS

Una marca de animación japonesa que aterriza en España para ofrecernos los largometrajes de "Dragon Ball", así como "Los Caballeros del Zodiaco", "Porco Rosso", "City Hunter", "Nadia", etc...

Hasta hoy solo conocías la serie de TV. Descubre ahora y alucina con la verdadera historia: 3 largometrajes "DRAGON BALL" o 6 largometrajes "DRAGON BALL Z". Un total de 9 películas que constituyen la filmografía completa "DRAGON BALL" de AKIRA TORIYAMA. NO LAS DEJES ESCABARI.

Primer lanzamiento: LA LEYENDA DEL DRAGON XERON

Disponible a partir del 17 de noviembre en los mejores videoclubs, grandes superficies, tiendas de cómics y de videojuegos.

UN FILM DE AKIRA TORIYAMA

LA LEYENDA DEL DRAGON XERON

LARGOMETRAJE

2995 P.P.S. Edición limitada

Cada película incluye las bases para participar en el sorteo de 10 dibujos originales de "DRAGON BALL" de AKIRA TORIYAMA. ¡Una joya que puede ser tuya!

Comics editados por PLANETA AGOSTINI

ANIME El futuro ya está aquí!!

ANIME VIDEO es una marca de MANGA FILMS, S.L., Arriaga 17, Bajos - 08021, Barcelona - Tel: (93) 206 43 11 - Fax: (93) 206 43 21

of this event has led to its being repeated in May, coinciding with the Salon del Comic, with additional films. So you can see why there is more than one

It started with a phone call. It was Helen. "Paul we've been asked by the Computer Exchange if we want to take a look at their shop. Apparently they've got a few anime type games and some of the new consoles like the 3DO and Jaguar and I thought that maybe you could....Paul?.Paul? are you still there?Hello!" (Sound of receiver bouncing off table and door slamming).

Quite a few second hand games were available at the shop with CYBERNATOR (SNES) at £18 being an absolute must buy! This is what a Gundam game should be like and if you haven't got a copy then shame on you. Though not itself based on anime, it's quite obvious where the inspiration for this game comes from and it features hot action and a decent story to boot. The thing that bugged me with the English language release of Cybernator is the changes made by western programmers. Gone is the suicide scene of the enemy president (obviously to protect our children from corruption) but the loss of the character faces accompanying the in-game dialogue is inexcusable! Another cheap game on offer was SUPER VALIS (also SNES) with the Japanese version at £8 and the American at £12. Again not strictly an Anime based game, this platform/slash-em-up game leans heavily on the Anime style. Not one

of the most challenging games about, but at £8 for a game it's a bargain. The other thing that bugs me with Western releases of Japanese games is the artwork. Why change something if it isn't broken? Have a look at the covers for the Japanese and American releases of Valis. What do you think?

These were just two of the many second hand games available, but the only

new Anime release available was..... RANMA 1/2 3. RUMIC-SOFT.SUPER NINTENDO. JAPANESE IMPORT.£59.99 Yet another

2 with only a few in-game features setting it above its predecessor.

The character sprites are larger than before and there are now twelve contestants to choose from, some taken from the previous two Ranma outings and a few new ones



GAM

thrown in for good measure. The sprites are all beautifully rendered and animated and, as before, capture the essence of the show perfectly with each fighter having their own personality. The backgrounds are also of a high quality featuring colourful representations of locations around the world. Check out Scotland complete with Nessie popping up

ME ZONE

reviewed by Paul Watson

special attacks but this time you can taunt your opponent allowing you to get in a fiercer attack. One thing that this version has in common with its older brother is the game play. It's just too easy and although there is a difficulty setting most gamers won't be playing the story mode for long. Playing slightly slower than Ranma 1/2 2, the

SNES some years ago I have my doubts about the gameplay. Now Japanese developers are writing for this machine be set to see some anime based games with footage taken directly from the animation itself! The results should be quite amazing.

BIG IN JAPAN

Coming soon in Japan on the Anime game front are two titles of particular interest. APPLESEED on the Super Nintendo is eagerly awaited, especially by me as I'm a big fan of Shirow's series. The only details I've heard as of yet is that Shirow himself was involved with the in game graphics, but I'm hoping it won't be too heavily text driven. The other game out soon is THE RECORD OF LODOSS WAR on the Sega Mega CD. Based on the wonderful fantasy series, the sound and visuals on this should be absolutely fantastic. I'm hoping that this too isn't heavily text based but considering the shows heavy RPG theme it is fairly likely.

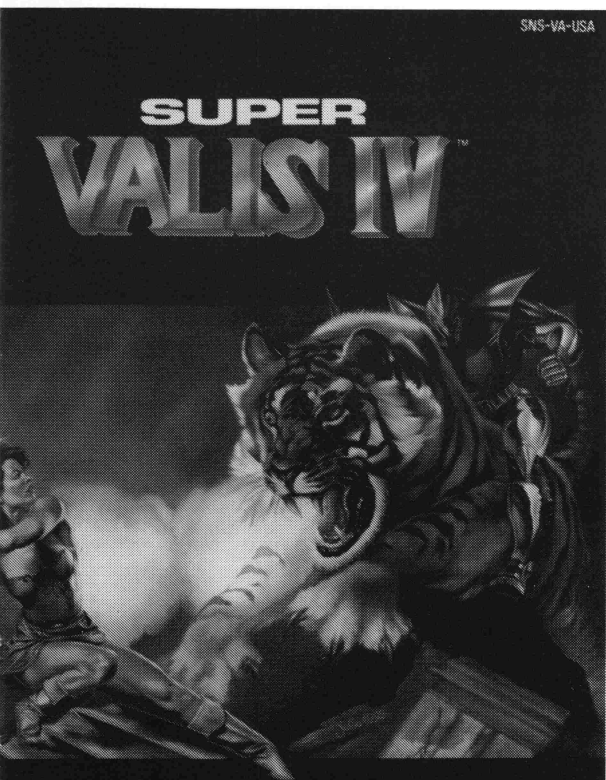
Available at the moment for all the Mecha freaks out there are games based on the big two. That's GUNDAM and PATLABOR in case you didn't know. V GUNDAM by

Bandai is a shoot-em-up/Final Fight hybrid featuring some astounding between level screen shots. Unfortunately the in-game graphics don't live up to these and the game itself is quite dull and repetitive. PATLABOR by INTERBEC also has some pretty nice graphics but the game play is very Japanese. Quite similar in style to GUNDAM F91 (reviewed previously) but playing slightly better, the game features quite a bit of Japanese text to hinder the non-Japanese player. I'd have to recommend Cybernator if some Mecha action is required though as these two are for die-hard fans only.

Just released in Japan was the eagerly anticipated SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 for the Super Nintendo and the Megadrive and this will be followed shortly by the equally anticipated Street Fighter animated movie. From some of the images seen, the film looks set to create quite an impact in both animation and gaming circles with an English language release being almost certain. Hopefully we'll be doing a double feature on the game and film as soon as we can but until then MATA NE!

Thank to Joe at the Computer Exchange for all his help in putting this together. They can be contacted at 32 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 5AD. Telephone 071-636 2666.

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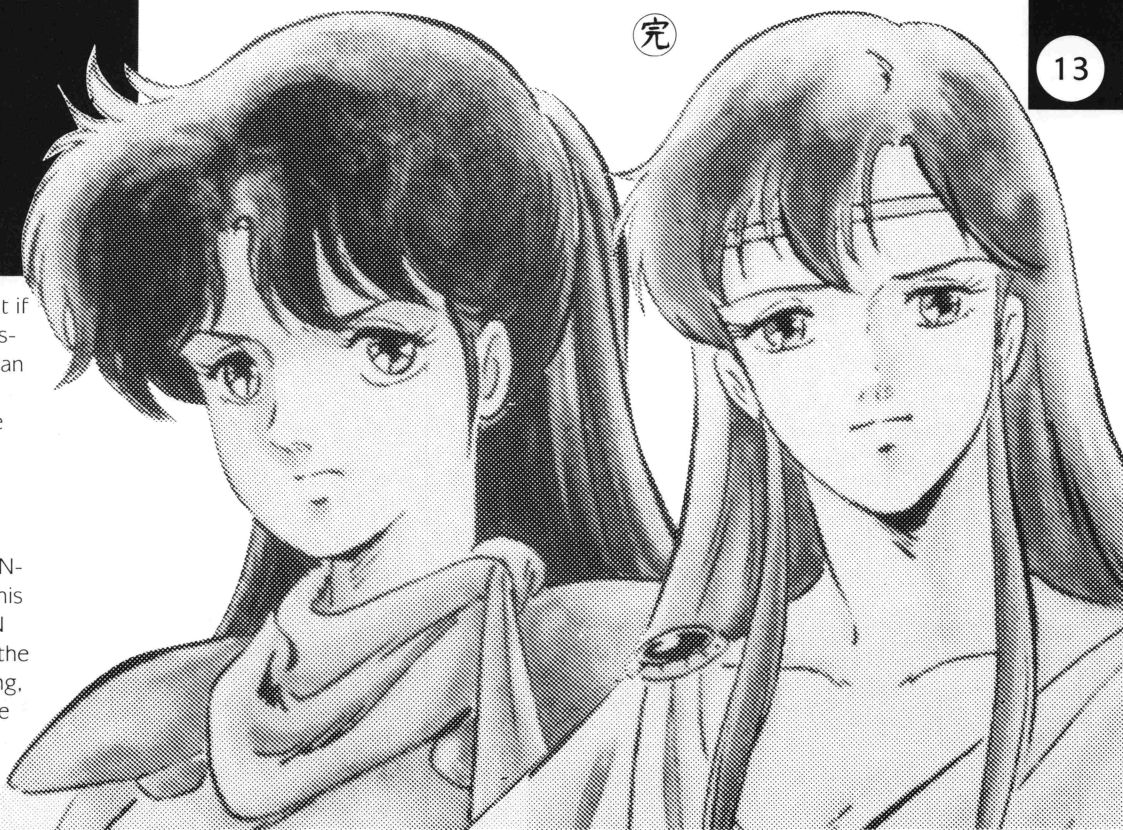


SNES-VA-USA

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET

game still has a fair bit of improvement but if the previous game is already in your possession then I'm not so sure if this purchase can be justified. We contacted Ocean and they had no plans as of yet to release this game so the import version may be your only chance if you can't get enough of Ranma-chan et al. I gave it 83%

Also present in the store was the PANASONIC 3DO machine. At the time of my visit, this CD based console was running ULTRAMAN which featured footage taken direct from the TV show! This looked and sounded stunning, though having played a similar game on the



Anime Reference Guide

Volume 2 Number 2



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AX DATA

* indicates approx figures, exact data not available at time of going to press

Attendees	2,500 *
Dealers	70 *
GOH speeches	4
Company panels	8
Masquerades	1
Award ceremonies	1
Karaoke contests	1
Game shows	1
Panels	18
Anime items	110 *
<i>shown in video program rooms</i>	
Anime items	74
<i>shown on AXTV broadcasts in Anaheim Marriott rooms</i>	

Shimmering heat, luxury hotels, tons of merchandise and Disneyland just down the road - yes, we've been to California for ANIME EXPO!

ANIME EXPRESS

It was a dull grey Wednesday in London - well, all right, it wasn't. It was right in the middle of the UK's first decent spell of summer weather in what seems like several centuries. Our publisher walked into the office, looked at us melting all over our desks, and said "You lot are getting soft. Go to Anaheim and do some real work! You leave next week."

What, us, argue? We're not THAT stupid!

Last year we managed to take in two California anime cons in one trip since ANIME EXPO and its colleague ANIME AMERICA were just a week apart. This summer AN-AM is at the other end of July, a week away from the San Diego Comicon, but AX stayed with the Fourth of July weekend. The convention staff hope to keep the event in Southern California in the future, and certainly the Anaheim Marriott hotel provided a splendid (and magnificently air-conditioned!) venue, complete with two video screening rooms and three live programme rooms with such diverse items as a panel on cel production and care, one entitled "Anime for Intellectuals", an anime trivia show and guest speeches. Then there was the 16,000 square foot dealers' room with over 70 booths featuring all the US anime companies as well as dealers, fanclubs and a few individuals unloading unwanted items from their collections, and AXTV, the con's own anime channel beaming programmes to the guestrooms of the main hotel 24 hours a day throughout the weekend.

Sadly the convention lost both its advertised principal guests of honour, Mikimoto

Haruhiko and Kitazume Hiroyuki, as well as Kawamori Shoji and Takanashi Minoru, to the ferocious demands of their work schedules; however they were replaced by director and chara designer Yuuki Nobuteru (GUNNM, WEATHERING CONTINENT, RECORD OF LODOSS WAR, FIVE STAR STORIES and many others) and Matsumoto Izumi, best known as creator and writer/artist of KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD. The West was represented once again by Scott Frazier, the first gaijin ever to work on animation production in Japan, and Allen Hastings, computer animation wizard of SEAQUEST DSV and BABYLON 5, made his first AX appearance.

The opening ceremony continued the tradition of an opening animation and also featured filmed snippets of work from each of the guests. The biggest treat, though, was provided by Scott Frazier - a five-minute promo film for the three new GATCHAMAN OAVs currently in production for Tatsunoko. He is working on the series with ARTLAND and said that even Japanese fans didn't know about it at that point (2nd July)! Production sketches showed the new chara and mecha designs and the production will use TWICE

ANIME COMPANIES

AX DIRECTORY

PLEASE NOTE : an increasing number of these companies now have their own merchandise or publishing interests - write for details

AD VISION, 2709 Chimney Rock, Houston, TX 77056
Subbed and dubbed video, publishing, merchandise, cels.

ANIMEIGO, PO Box 989, Wilmington, NC 28402-0989
Subbed and dubbed video, merchandise, cels.

CENTRAL PARK MEDIA, 250 W 57th St., Suite 317, New York, NY 10107
Subbed and dubbed video, own labels
CENTRAL PARK MEDIA, **US MANGA CORPS**, **ANIME 18**. Distributes **AD VISION**, **KIT PARKER VIDEO**, **THE RIGHT STUF**, **US RENDITIONS**, **VIZ VIDEO**, **LASER DISC ENTERTAINMENT**. Merchandise.

LA HERO, 1123 Domingues St., Unit K, Carson, CA 90746-3539
Subbed and dubbed video, own labels **US RENDITIONS**, **ULTRA ACTION VIDEO**, **DARK IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT**. Publishing, merchandise.

STREAMLINE PICTURES, 2908 Nebraska Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404
Dubbed video, theatrical and tv release, merchandise, cels.

VIZ COMMUNICATIONS, 440 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA 94107
Own video label **VIZ VIDEO**, publishing, merchandise.

the number of cel sheets used on **BUBBLE GUM CRASH** to ensure the high quality that **GATCHAMAN** and its fans deserve.

INDUSTRY NEWS

AD VISION have an impressive list of 15 titles in the next 8 months, including Nagai Go's **NEW CUTEY HONEY**, **MAGIC TWILIGHT** and the rest of the **PHANTASIA** series, and the creation of a new division, **SoftCel Pictures**, to handle more adult oriented videos. They also have a new manga line, **GRAPHIC VISIONS**, to provide further adventures of some of the characters in their releases and translated Japanese works. They kick off this summer with new graphic series based on **BURN UP** and **SOL BIANCA**, plus Nagano's **GIRL FROM PHANTASIA** in translation and **A.D. VISION's Magazine**.

STREAMLINE has licensed the rights for the classic **MEGAZONE 23** parts I & II and is in negotiation for a number of other properties, and the company has negotiated a major distribution deal with mainstream distributor **Orion Home Video**, continuing their plan to take anime into the entertainment mainstream in the USA. They are also expanding their

garage kit line, with more **ROBOT CARNIVAL** kits joining the four **SPEED RACER** car kits.

US MANGA CORPS announced its major coup - it has acquired the US rights in **RECORD OF LODOSS WAR**, as well as the beautiful **TALE OF GENJI**. The company also plans an extensive merchandising campaign for garage kits, t-shirts and software on **PROJECT A-KO** and **DOMINION**. Parent company **CENTRAL PARK MEDIA** now have an impressive catalogue listing all their own releases and those on the labels they distribute. They also have plans for graphic releases in collaboration with **Tim Eldred** and **John Ott** of **Studo Go**; a new **GALL FORCE** comic is due soon and other titles are being negotiated.

ANIMEIGO is taking the daring step of dubbing fan icon **BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** into English, including redubbing the music, which is among the most popular in anime. Following on from the success of their **RIDING BEAN** dub, **ANIMEIGO** want to make **BGC** available to a wider audience, but to maintain the reputation for quality which their subtitled releases have earned. Their new acquisitions include **SPIRIT OF WONDER** and **BAOH**. They have four beautiful new metal miniature figures of the **Knight Sabers** in their merchandise range, and British offshoot **ANIME PROJECTS** has a new line of character pins designed by the UK's top anime artist **Steve Kyte**.

VIZ VIDEO's basic plan is to carry on releasing **RANMA 1/2** videos, since the company has achieved such success with them since its creation last year. **VIZ SHOP-BY-MAIL** now has a catalogue of all their merchandise, publications and videos. **PIONEER** announced that both the hugely popular **TENCHI MUJO!** **RYO OH KI** and **MOLDDIVER** will be available on VHS as well as laserdisc, in both dubbed and subbed formats, from August. **LA HERO** will release the much-admired film **WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** in the late summer in a subtitled version, and will offer **ORGUSS 02** and **MACROSS PLUS**.

GUEST NEWS

Apart from **Scott Frazier's** work on the new **GATCHAMAN** series, there were some exciting announcements from the other Guests of Honour. **Matsumoto Izumi** is working on three new manga titles, **MAGICAL POWER MAKO**, a romantic sf story set in Tokyo in 2030 and due in **SUPER JUMP** in the autumn, **BLACK MOON**, a nineteenth century romance for **COMIC GAMMA**, and a "digital comic", **COMIC CAPP**. He is also working with **Tarada Kenji** on a **KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD** illustrated novel. Meanwhile **Yuuki Nobuteru** is working on the next instalment of his **VAELBER SAGA** manga and considering both the **X** and **BASTARD!** movies. See next issue for our interview with **Yuuki-sensei!**

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Illustration Ben Nunez © AD Vision/MRC



After his exploration of the background of those obnoxious aliens last issue, Darren Ashmore (ably aided by YUKO) focussed on the first UY movie and the UK TV episodes released by ANIME PROJECTS.

URUSEI YATSURA, TV VOLUME 1

Way back around the turn of the 1980s Kitty Film and Studio Pierrot decided to animate a nice little manga series called URUSEI YATSURA that had been running for a year or so and appeared to be reasonably popular (a bit of an understatement I know ...) To say that the series was well received when first aired is also an understatement and over the years its popularity was not seen to fail, till at last (Ms Takahashi having turned her pen to another topic) Lum & Co. were allowed to retire gracefully, having played out their 10th birthday in style. However, while mainstream UY was slipping into its well-earned "downtime" in Japan, across the world many of us were just beginning to pick up on it. Thanks to the efforts of those fans who dared to enjoy anime before it became a "hot topic", it was not long before horns and green hair became the only fashion statement one could make, while many a conversation was interspersed with such linguistic gems as "darling no baka", "ZACK" (or nearest phonetic equivalent) and "I never should have birthed him!" Its popularity at this time was enhanced despite, or because of, the general lack of real English translation, as of all the anime that was finding its way westward at least UY had plenty of amusing visuals to keep the viewer occupied if the dialogue was way beyond them. As things progressed and a market was recognised, it did not seem that a great deal of time would pass before someone latched on to this fan favourite, and sure enough AnimEigo stepped into the breach and took up the reins of this most unusual series.

While AnimEigo have to date released over a dozen of the TV volumes, all the OAVs and most of the films, only the first TV tape and feature film are discussed here as they have seen recent release in the UK under the Anime Projects banner.

One's first impression of the TV series, once you have adjusted to the technical lag of a decade and more, is the "basic" style in which the whole thing has been executed; do not be mistaken, though, I do not imply that the artwork is in any way deficient, but rather that the backgrounds are intentionally minimalist in form and function, because URUSEI YATSURA is, in effect, purely character driven slapstick, with no real reference to its setting other than as a backdrop and convenient sounding board. Indeed, as many of the episodes demonstrate, it is possible to dispense with Tomobiki entirely and still keep the flavour of the series.

But why should this be the case? How can even a large number of characters hold our attention no matter what they may concern themselves with? The answer (or at least my answer) should suggest itself to you every time you watch a clown perform; these "people" are the world in miniature. Lum, Ataru, Sakura and the others are human stereotypes, hurled blindfolded into situations that we can all too readily associate with, albeit somewhat exaggerated. The "poor sap" syndrome is backed up by the frenetic speed at which the episodes are hurled at you, with seemingly no regard for unimportant matters like continuity or disbelief on the part of the viewer. (If you need proof, count how many times Ataru's house burns down, blows up or falls apart in the first season alone. Indeed, I believe it is better not to think too hard about URUSEI YATSURA and just experience it; I doubt if you will be disappointed.

That does not, sadly, mean that UY is free from flaw. It falls foul of the fact that the original was designed solely for a Japanese audience and as a result many of the scripted jokes and nearly all of the sight gags have been lost in translation. Even with the help of the voluminous "Liner Notes"™ (looking more like a leader column from the WALL STREET JOURNAL this time) unless you are possessed of a vast knowledge of Japanese cultural niceties you are most probably missing out on a good few laughs. (AnimEigo would like to hear from anyone spotting any gaffes that they may have missed in their version.) That does not mean this subtitled version is awkward to follow or unfunny. Great care appears to have been taken to provide a script that follows the tenets of the story in hand, allows for the inflexibility of our native tongue and the subtleties of our own unique sense of humour. (For those of you who really must know, the subtitling is up to AnimEigo's excellent standards yet again, nuff said.)

For packaging, it is a case of swings and roundabouts. The US (NTSC) release sports a nifty "long life" cassette and cardboard slipcase for its \$35.00 price tag, while the British Lion can only hit back with a fairly generic cassette and jewelcase, but at the



URUSEI YATSURA

revis

by Darren



SELL
PUR

ited
Ashmore

wholly reasonable price of £12.99. I am afraid I can't yet give any indication as to the price of the promised first LD set.

On balance, this has to rank as AnimEigo/Anime Projects' supreme release to date and my own personal favourite. I cannot recommend it highly enough and it gains a justly deserved 9.9 out of 10.

URUSEI YATSURA - for lovers of comedy, science fiction, romance, fantasy, robotics, horror, slapstick, etc. etc. etc

URUSEI YATSURA MOVIE 1 - ONLY YOU

This first foray into the cinema for the UY cast was something of a change from the usual diet of manic happenings that most fans had grown used to throughout the

series. The fact that the film had to carry its audience for over an hour on one theme called for a more reasoned approach and so (as has become common with all the UY features) the background details were at last given a chance to lead the way.

That alone is enough to give you the feeling that you are watching a drastically different item, for while the hearts of the various characters remain true to form, the whole is paced so differently as to be a little odd after so many of the TV episodes. This is good, as by allowing the charac-

ters to take a step back from their usual "in your face" postures, space is made available to tell a really good story in detail for a change; but it's bad because it has to assume full foreknowledge of the characters and previous situations - it certainly gives nothing away to the newcomer! On balance, even though this was the first UY release by both AnimEigo and Anime Projects for the English-speaking market, for reasons of aesthetics I think I would recommend coming to ONLY YOU via at least the first volume of TV episodes, rather than vice versa.

The story opens with a pre-credits sequence showing Ataru, as a young child, playing "shadow tag" with a little girl; all too innocent, you might think, and you would be right, for as soon as Ataru announces he has tagged his playmate's shadow she reveals herself to be yet another XT Princess, named

Elle, and says that stepping on a person's shadow is as good as a proposal on her homeworld and that she will send a ship to collect Ataru in 11 years, when they are old enough to marry. At this point Elle departs and our hero promptly forgets the whole deal.

That being so, even Ataru is unprepared for the beating meted out to him at the hands of his darling wife Lum (and friends) upon their receiving invitations to Ataru and Elle's marriage. Indeed, only the arrival of a ship from Elle's world, commanded by her nanny, Barbara, saves Ataru's hide as he is gifted with a protective blister shield to ward off the (justified) depredations of his disaffected wife.

Upset by Ataru's longing for Elle, Lum seeks advice from that most martial of her friends, Bente, and together they hatch a plan. While Bente hires a "space cab" and gathers all of the "happy couple's" friends, Lum circumvents the prohibition on physical contact with Ataru and simply vacuums the Moroboshi family aboard her saucer before heading off to rendezvous with her father's fleet, her intent being to marry Ataru officialy before Elle knows what has happened.

However, shortly after meeting up with the Onoboshi flotilla, Barbara stages an unheard-of entree with her romantically dangerous flagship and the battle is on in earnest. What began as a tug of love on a Galactic scale is swiftly escalating into open war, for when two such powers clash with Love as their prize there can indeed be only one. (Apologies to all HIGHLANDER fans.) But it is also true to say that no matter who wins this day out, Ataru Moroboshi is a guaranteed loser.

A little slow and not as immediately accessible as the TV series, this movie however is supremely enjoyable and simply oozing with "feelgood factor". I felt that I had no option to rate it as highly as the TV series, if for different reasons - a worthy 9 out of 10.

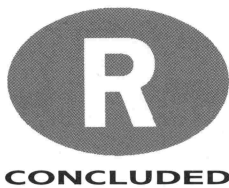
Production standards as far as subtitling and presentation go are good as always, the "Liner notes"™ providing better support than for the TV series. You can expect to pay around \$35.00 for the AnimEigo (NTSC) version on both cassette and laserdisc, while the Anime Projects (PAL) version trolls along only on tape but for a very attractive £12.99.

As a quick aside, those UK fans who were wondering what is going to be done about Movie 2, BEAUTIFUL DREAMER, must sadly dash their hopes for the moment, for my last communique with Anime Projects revealed that a licence has not been negotiated with US MANGA CORPS.



ROMAN ALBUMS

A series of paperback anime reference guide-books published in Japan by Tokuma Shoten. Each volume is dedicated to a particular series or film, comprehensively covering it via frame blowups, storyboards, production designs, staff interviews and even sheet music and



song lyrics. Since the first album (a slim volume on the first SPACE CRUISER YAMATO TV series) was published in 1979, many publishers have imitated the format, though none have equalled the Roman Albums' impressive run or breadth of subject matter.



SABRE RIDER AND THE STAR SHERRIFFS

US English language version of the 1984 Studio Pierrot/NTV series SEIJUSHI BISMARCK (Eng. trans : Bismarck, Gunslingers of the Stars) a "space-Western" featuring a multinational team of heroes (Hikari Shinji - Japan, Bill Wilcox USA, Richard Lancelot - UK, and Marianne - France) fighting alien invaders with the help of their transformable, gun-sliding giant robo, Bismarck.



A-Z TO OF ANIME

by Steve Kyte



SADAMOTO Yoshiyuki

Chara designer for the GAINAX studio (see : GAINAX). His credits include WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (ROYAL SPACE FORCE) and NADIA OF THE MYSTERIOUS SEAS, aka THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER. A collection of his illustrations based

on these and other projects has been published by Kadokawa in their "New Illustrated Collection", entitled ALPHA.

SAITO Takao

Manga artist/writer. One of Japan's most prolific and successful creators, he made his professional debut in 1955 and formed his own studio, Saito Productions, 5 years later. He now owns his own publishing company, LEAD PUBLISHING. A pioneer of the "gekiga" (drama pictures) genre of gritty realistic drama stories which revolutionised the Japanese comics scene in the '60s, his most famous creation, the ultra-cool assassin GOLGO-13, aka THE PROFESSIONAL (see : THE PROFESSIONAL) is the all-time best-selling manga title in Japan, at the no. 1 spot for 17 years and running to over 80 volumes. An anime feature film version was produced in 1983 by Tokyo Movie Shinsha (see : TMS) and is available on video in the UK from Manga Entertainment Limited and in the US from Streamline Pictures.

SAKAGUCHI Hisashi

Manga writer/artist and anime director/producer. Creator of the fascinating eco-thriller VERSION, released in the West by Studio Proteus and Dark Horse Comics. Sakaguchisan joined manga/anime god TEZUKA Osamu's Mushi studios at the age of 17 (see : TEZUKA, MUSHI), working his way up to director/producer. He left Mushi in 1979 to become a full time manga artist/illustrator but has occasionally worked on other Tezuka anime projects. He specialises in SF and fantasy but in 1989 he produced the critically-acclaimed anti-war story ISHI NO HANA (Flowers of Stone) which which can be found in the libraries of schools and universities across Japan.

SAKAMOTO Ryuichi

Composer/actor. Sprang to world fame in the late '70s as co-founder of the innovative techno-pop group Y.M.O. (Yellow Magic Orchestra). Y.M.O. pioneered the use of digital sampling, whereby organic sounds are modified and combined by computer to create new sounds. Nine albums and two world tours later, Y.M.O. disbanded in 1983 and Sakamoto began his cinema career; MERRY CHRISTMAS MR. LAWRENCE and THE LAST EMPEROR featured both Sakamoto's acting and composition skills. In 1985 he produced a stunning score for GAINAX's debut anime feature film WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (ROYAL SPACE FORCE) - an excellent example of his multi-cultural style. Sakamoto has described himself as a "world musician" who delights in mixing various ethnic sounds and musical styles.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Western Connection is into Anime in a big way. The label which started its Anime output with **THE SENSUALIST** last year has an exciting line-up of Anime titles for the remainder of 1994 and the first half of 1995.

Starting with **GREY** and **SAMURAI GOLD** in September, WESTERN CONNECTION will introduce a whole new range of Anime to British audience in the increasingly popular subtitled format. (There's also the dubbed English version of Tezuka Osamu's great film **PHOENIX 2772, SPACE FIREBIRD**, for dubbing fans.)

LUPIN III Hits Britain in two film-length adventures, **FUMA CONSPIRACY** and **THE GOLD OF BABYLON**. The cheeky thief and his gang and their hapless foe Inspector Zenigate have long been fan favourites; find out why in these fast, funny caper movies.

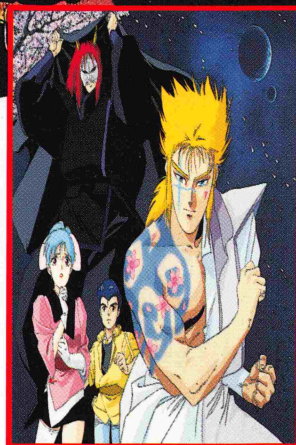
THE HUMMINGBIRDS take to the skies - four girl singers who are also top fighter pilots in crazy adventure that will give you a whole new angle on a TOP GUN!

Or take **SLOW STEP** with Adachi Mitsuru's teenage romance - two young sports stars fight for the affections of a pretty, independent classmate who gets herself ever so slightly embroiled in deception and disguise to cope with both of them.

And in **USHIO & TORA** a typical Japanese teenager causes big problems when he releases a spirit trapped in his family shrine - and forms a strange sort of friendship with it.



There's more to Anime than you realise. These and many more titles from WESTERN CONNECTION will widen your horizons.



JUST RETURN THIS SLIP TO THE ADDRESS BELOW AND WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF FORTHCOMING RELEASES. DON'T MISS OUT ON SOME OF THE MOST UNUSUAL ANIME AROUND!

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Three favourite films:

Western Connection, Suite 18, 37 Westbourne Terrace, London. W2 3UR

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST RELEASES!



怪幻幽

It is amazing what you miss not being in Japan; this is why ANIME UK is such essential reading for all those gaijin fans. Just occasionally, they get the opportunity to be first. Without further ado, carefully omitting to mention PIONEER's plans to release TENCHIMUYO! in the UK in the Autumn on video, here's a new series :

YUUGEN KAISHA

Remembering that TENCHIMUYO! was a play on kanji, so too is this. YUUGEN KAISHA means "Private Company", but not with these kanji.

BACKGROUND

Even though science has been around for a long time, established customs persist contrary to the ways of technology. Now, with the increase in population and the advances

of science into the realms of the gods, the citizens of the dark world have nowhere left to hide, so they have begun to re enter the human world. This causes many bizarre phenomena.

The causers of these events are not human; if they live in a world that is not like theirs, trouble is bound to occur. Where there are trouble-makers, there are also fixers. So the exorcists started to turn professional. A company has been formed by these people. Although they fight for justice, they also need to eat to survive; of course they charge for their work.

This is YUUGEN KAISHA - a paranormal investigation agency that specialises in spirits. When there is a job to be done, the young President, KISARAGI Ayaka (surname first, Japanese style) calls together her staff with their special powers and they sally forth.

Actually, Ayaka's family have been serving a shrine for many generations. They chased spirits and performed exorcisms, but they had never had a female priest. When she found out that she would have to live as a mere shrine maiden (miko) and not a priest, Ayaka rebelled, running away from home to start her own company.

Yuugen Kaisha is run like a temp agency. Normally the staff have other jobs, but when a case comes up, they are called in. At the moment it is a small firm, but eventually Ayaka wants to be President of a large corporation with lots of regular employees.

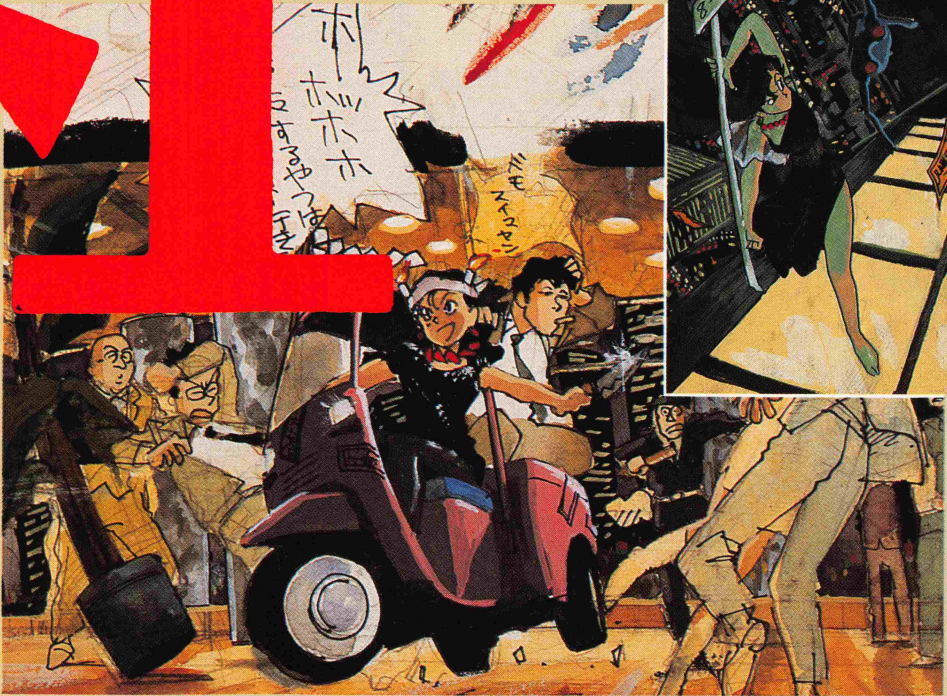
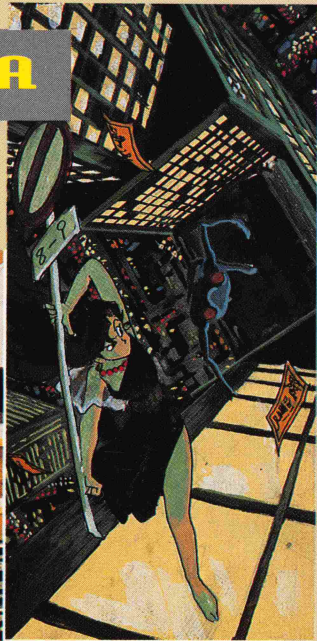
SECTION U

Naturally, there are also people whose regular job is along the same lines. The Police had long mastered the art of scientific investigation, but occasionally they came across cases



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YUUGEN KAISHA



too bizarre to be solved by the usual methods; so this new section was created to solve these so-called "supernatural phenomena". However, it's also said that this is a section for "exiles" from more normal police work. Some VIP said "The FBI have started using telepaths; we should have started putting an effort into this field earlier. But even now it is not too late. The world is full of mysterious things. Good luck."
Three people were given these incoherent "orders": Assistant Inspector KARINO Kouzou, Policeman ISHIBARA and ASAKAGA. What can they possibly achieve?

YUUGEN KAISHA CASE FILE 00 : THE BEGINNING IS SUSPICIOUS AND SPLENDID

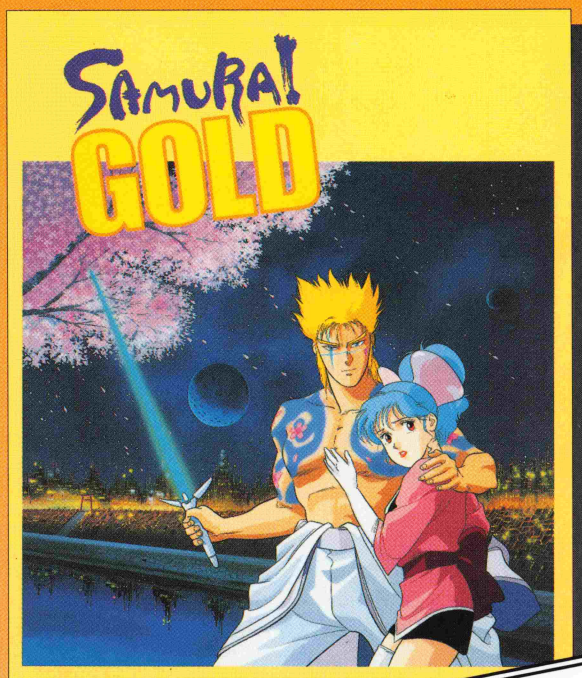
On sale July 25, Special Preview Video 15 mins, ¥1000. VHS Stereo, limited release Contents : 1) Opening, 2) Yuugen Kaisha company information, staff introduction. Section U introduction. 3) Image boards (see our centre spread!) 4) highlights of episode 1. 5) Scenes from the afureco (dubbing session - I was there!) with main voice actors. So that the voice actors and the viewers don't get taken over by evil spirits, the priest ODA Mudou performed a special exorcism. At the end of this video, we have a special recording of it.

YUUGEN KAISHA - FOR REAL CASE FILE 01 - KISS OF FIRE (ONE MORE TIME, THE KISS OF FLAMES)

On sale August 25.
CASE FILE 02 - END OF THE WORLD (TO THE END OF HELL, ALONGSIDE YOU)
CASE FILE 03 - LOVE ME TENDER (MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, I LOVE YOU)
CASE FILE 04 - (TOKYO, BUDDHISM, BIG RING LEADER)
Total 4 volumes, each 30 minutes, Stereo CAV/HiFi, ¥5800 each



THE COLOURS OF AUTUMN



SAMURAI GOLD (TBC) £10.99

Samurai Gold exposes the core of ancient evil and human weakness that lies at the heart of modern EDO - the computer system which controls major cities and space colonies.

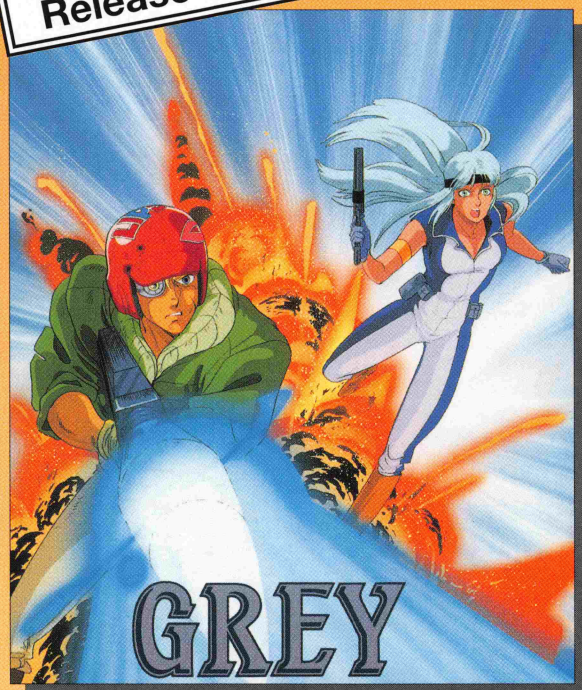
Five Senior Administrators now rule the turbulent universe, bringing peace and calm after centuries of conflicts. A sharp-eyed undercover agent is needed to support them, spotting criminals where no police force can go and bringing them to justice.

And who better to fill the role than the son of one of the Administrators, with personal as well as political loyalties to bind him?

From the same production stable as GREY, Samurai Gold mixes Japanese legend with interplanetary action.

Helen McCarthy

Release date 12th Sep. 1994



GREY (TBC) £12.99

Grey wants to become a citizen. The only way he can achieve this is by killing enough people to progress through the six rigidly defined ranks of Troop status to rank A.

The casualties include his former girlfriend and may come to include his new love...

In our world of ethnic conflicts and human misery, GREY has an undeniable resonance.

This new translation by Jonathan Clements captures the stark simplicity of the story for a new generation of fans.

GREY is anime for the generations of Vietnam, Yugoslavia and Rwanda; The futility of war and the pointlessness of human suffering are graphically portrayed.

Helen McCarthy



Galactic Pirates (I - III) (18) £10.99 each

Available from The Virgin, HMV, Tower Records, Our Price, Titan Distribs. Anime Projects, Forbidden Planet and all other good video outlets.

WESTERN CONNECTION

THE STORY BEGINS

CASE FILE 01 : KISS OF FIRE

"Pretty girl serial murders! Dracula's coffin has been brought from Transylvania to Tokyo. Ayaka is going after a modern vampire that appears in broad daylight ..."

Pretty girls were murdered in broad daylight, their bodies sucked dry! The media were having a field day about modern-day vampires. The Transylvanian Ambassador came to Yuugen Kaisha to explain to Ayaka that these incidents were occurring because Dracula's coffin, a national treasure, had been sold to a Japanese investor. He wanted them to investigate in secret because he did not want the dishonour of selling a national treasure to become known. Meanwhile, Inspector Karino had realised that this was no ordinary weird event, so he called on the professionals and the joint investigation began!

With Suimei's assistance, Ayaka and Karino were able to predict the next attack and save the victim's life, but the vampire got away. When they went to visit the girl in hospital, the strange master of a coffee shop also appeared. Ayaka, thinking he was the vampire, gave chase, just then, another victim arrived at the hospital. Were there not one, but two vampires?

CASE FILE 02 - END OF THE WORLD

"Late at night, Ayaka had an accident in a taxi. She went to visit the taxi driver Sano in hospital, but though supposed to have light injuries, he had died. The shadow of a youma appeared at the hospital of the mysterious death!"

As usual, Ayaka was drunk. Very drunk. On her way home in a taxi, she was caught in a car accident. Her powers had alerted her to the danger, so the taxi wasn't too badly damaged; the driver, Sano, only had a fractured shoulder and was not in critical condition.

The next morning, after getting over her hangover, Ayaka found out about the accident (!) so she and Mamoru went to visit Sano, but at the hospital, she discovered that he had already died! She spotted a strange mark on the deceased's stomach area, so she began to have doubts about his death and decided to investigate.

Meanwhile, Karino was investigating the hospital because there had been a lot of strange deaths, and in the middle of the night a nurse carrying a patient had entered an elevator had disappeared. The next evening, as he was waiting at the elevator investigating the mystery, he met Ayaka. Suimei said that a strong Level 1 youma (spirit), which had to be called by someone, was active. Ayaka and Karino found the youma had taken over the patient.

This youma could warp dimensions; instead of capturing it, they had a tough time escaping. What was Ayaka to do? Two of the staff of Yuugen Kaisha, Rokkon and Nanami, join forces to save the world!

MAIN CAST

KISARAGI Ayaka
KARINO Kouzou
SHIMESU Mamoru
ROKUGOU Nanami
SUIMEI
ISHIBARA Yuujirou
ASAKAGA Ruriko
Master (Vampire)
MIZUHARA Akiko

MATSUMOTO Rika
YAMADERA Kouichi
IKURA Kazu
MITSUIISHI Kotono
WATANABE Naoko
TATSUTA Naoki
KAWANAMI Youko
TANAKA Hideyuki
KOYAMA Yuka

NOTE : PRONUNCIATION : as in "Kouzou", the long "o" sound is written "ou" in this article. It could just as well have been written "oh" or "oo". This is the way it is written in hiragana, though.

This article is © 13 July 1994 Peter Evans/Sakura Studio, and may not be copied by any means, in whole or in part, without the permission of the author. We would like to acknowledge the kind assistance of PIONEER LDC in the preparation of this article. Special thanks also to Hitoshi Doi (it's amazing what one will do for an Ami-chan cell!)



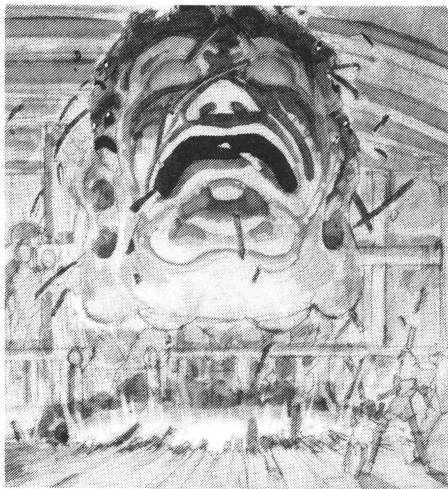
YUUGEN KAISHA CHARACTERS

KISARAGI Ayaka - the president of "Yuugen Kaisha" and the heroine of this story. She comes from a family of ghost sweepers, but she hates training and runs away from home. In order to make up for her lack of spiritual power, she uses some exorcism aids.

She has a nice body and looks like a fashionable lady, but she spends money like water, and also likes to drink a lot, so she is very different from the way that she appears. She has no boyfriend. She likes karaoke, and her weaknesses are low blood pressure and hangovers.

KARINO Kouzou - an assistant inspector of the Police Department Special Section U. He wears a worn-out coat and has messy hair; because of his appearance he is called "Mr. not-outstanding" in the Police Department. He was a candidate for an executive position and had been relied on, but he ended up in Section U.

He's bad at talking and he's slow. But sometimes, he's the first one at the scene of supernatural events, and he also sometimes sounds as if he's read the other person's mind. His eyes can look very sharp. Nobody knows what kind of person he is - he's just an elusive middle-aged man.



SHIMESU Mamoru - the most important member of Yuugen Kaisha, sent by the Kisaragi family, he watches over Ayaka and protects her (from herself). His family had been servants to the Kisaragi family for a long time. He doesn't have any spiritual powers, but he takes care of the housework, home finances, computer programs, and manages Ayaka's cases - not because he's a servant, but more like a younger brother who has to cover for his older sister. He knows enough not to lose paranormal battles with normal adults, but he can't go up against Ayaka. If Ayaka ever gets a boyfriend, Mamoru will be the one who cries, but he's the only boy Ayaka's sex appeal doesn't work on.

ROKUGOU Nanami - currently a high school student, she's working part time at Yuugen Kaisha. When she is surprised or feels fear, she lets out a fire attack and has an offensive power; but she's very scared of many things. Also, she can't control her power, so in contrast to her cuteness she's a very dangerous girl.

SUIMEI - one of the main members of Yuugen Kaisha, she's an old woman who can do many kinds of fortune telling. She's working to save money for her future old age (she has a future old age?) and to keep her beauty. She has a radarlike power with which she can predict where the next spiritual incident will take place, but when it gets dangerous, she doesn't fight. She says "I don't want to die yet".

ROKKON - also on the staff of YUUGEN KAISHA. he was the son of a tofu store owner, but had tried many jobs such as taxi driver before he went to Hagaromo mountain to become a priest and train. He has a large body and voice to match. He's a strong fighter but his spiritual power is inconsistent, so he sometimes succeeds and sometimes fails. Even if he fails, he laughs it off. Is he dependable? It's hard to say ...

ISHIBARA Yuujirou - Section U's manager. He just drinks tea or sleeps, and is just waiting for his retirement. He's worked for 42 years and was never late nor missed a day, never gets angry, never laughs loudly, and never says things that aren't important. Nobody knows what he enjoys in life. He's like a hermit.

ASAKAGA Ruriko - she's the old miss of Section U. She doesn't wear makeup, her hair is always done up, and she's always in uniform. She has mean eyes behind her glasses, and is never satisfied unless everything goes exactly according to plan; she's been driven out of all the other sections and ended up in Section U, so the current targets for her sarcastic remarks are Karino and Ishibara. She relieves her stress by breaking rice bowls, but she puts them in a bag first so she doesn't have to clean up the mess afterwards.

完



It's all Ali Yildirim's fault. His letter in issue 14 suggested announcing an advance topic for discussion then giving readers the chance to air their own views. It seemed like a great idea, and so ANIME SOAPBOX was born.

The Soapbox is like Speakers' Corner - you can say whatever you like within the law, as long as you're willing to take the flak for it afterwards. The only rule is that you must be willing to have your full name printed above your views, and that although we won't publish your full address it must appear on your original submission. We won't accept any Soapbox submissions containing personal attacks on individuals - religion, politics, looks or musical taste have nothing to do with anime! If a company or individual is named in relation to a topic, a copy will go to them and they will have the right of reply.

Our first topic will be MANGA VIDEO - is the company unfairly treated by fandom? Or do they set themselves up for criticism by their release policy and advertising? Two British fanzine editors who have recently published editorials on this topic have kindly given me permission to print their views here. Write in with YOUR opinion - the best letters will be published in issue 16 and 17. And if you have a topic you feel strongly about, and you'd like the chance to sound off to an interested audience, the ANIME SOAPBOX is here for you! Send a SOAPBOX piece of not more than 600 words to ANIME SOAPBOX, ANIME UK MAGAZINE, 70 MORTIMER STREET, LONDON W1N 7DF.

STOP BASHING MANGA VIDEO **PAUL COOK, editor of ANIMACE, in the editorial from issue 4**

There seems a disturbing trend among fan circles currently towards MANGA VIDEO BASHING. Although I will be the first to admit that I don't agree with everything MANGA VIDEO have ever done, some fans seem to be forgetting two important achievements. Firstly, MANGA VIDEO established the anime industry in this country. They created the interest that has allowed other video companies to release titles that don't necessarily appeal to large audiences, i.e. the ones most of the fans actually want to see. Secondly, MANGA VIDEO has taken what was a minority interest and sold it to the mass market. Each title MANGA produces sells an average of 15,000 copies according to their own figures, whereas the actual fan base in this country cannot number more than a couple of thousand. MANGA VIDEO are in the business of making money, not in pleasing every whim of a very vocal minority whose numbers are small enough to be dismissed as far as sales are concerned. Hurling abuse at MANGA or asking fans to boycott them will only prompt them to

Announcing the start of an all-new feature

ANIME SOAPBOX

ignore fan input altogether, which will be the biggest tragedy the industry has yet faced. I feel that any company who wishes to be profitable will listen to constructive comments on how their product can be improved, after all, better product = more sales = more money to make better product! So please, no more scenes like at ConTanimeTed last year when Helen McCarthy had to step in at a question and answer session to stop poor Lawrence Guinness being pilloried by irate fans. It's not all his fault! Remember, without the UROT-SUKIDOJI there can be no NUKU NUKU.

IS MANGA VIDEO TOO VIOLENT? **KEITH ELCOMBE, editor of JUDGE ZONE, expands on his editorial from JZ3**

Is it just me, or is it that we're being bombarded with anime titles from MANGA VIDEO at the moment? Not that some of you may see this as a bad thing, but do we really need to see the same old good vs bad/humans vs demons saga time and time again? And just lately the in thing seems to be cyborgs battling for their survival in an all too hostile future.

I'm not saying that I don't like this sort of thing, indeed if I was to be quite honest I'd say that I do enjoy it, but isn't it time for a nice refreshing change of genre, instead of blood & guts and sex & violence every time? To me it seems as if MANGA VIDEO have found a niche in the anime market for this kind of thing - it is after all the violence and visual impact of its portrayal that got a lot of us into anime in the first place - but after a while it all begins to look the same and there's nothing new anymore. (Put a demon and a buxom brunette in the same room and you KNOW what's going to happen next!) My fear is that many people will become tired of the same old thing, and turn away from anime without having the chance to see the other side of it. By this I mean the 'quality' - fine and well detailed animation - and the side that overflows with humour and a feeling of 'goodness' - without the fear of some demon turning up to spoil the situation by killing something.

It could also be detrimental for MANGA VIDEO to keep putting out 15/18 certificate films, just to make a quick buck, as the average man in the street may get the impression

that all anime is of a violent nature, and begin associating anime with all other types of 'video nasties'. It is all too easy to see adverts for such MANGA VIDEO releases in magazines such as SUPER PLAY, AMIGA

FORMAT and other computer gaming magazines, but this could be all too detrimental when one considers that although the readers of such maga-

zines are mostly 'adult', a large percentage of readers are children under 15 who would not be allowed to buy videos of a violent and sexual nature. Take for example an advert by MANGA VIDEO in May's issue of AMIGA FORMAT magazine for WIND OF AMNESIA and MERMAID FOREST: the caption for MERMAID FOREST reads "... part of the RUMIK WORLD collection from one of Japan's most successful adventure writers RUMIKO TAKAHASHI. A tale of hideous experiments, torture and grave robbing." No doubt that MERMAID FOREST is a great video, but what would any parent feel reading that advert, knowing that their child, who is only 12 years old, had just read that?

Surely most parents would not wish for their children to watch that sort of thing, and coupled with the bad press dished out by the media (tabloid press in particular) about anime in general, would it not be possible for parents to think of "those nasty and violent cartoons from Japan" whenever they hear a reference to manga and anime? How are parents supposed to form a just opinion on anime when confronted with tabloid press articles on the "evil" of anime, and adverts from MANGA VIDEO on their latest release that contains more demons and sex than you can shake a stick at?

What about the pool of non-violent titles yet unreleased here in the UK? Why don't 'MV' snatch up the rights to them and release them over here? It would be a breath of fresh air for the video collector, I'm sure. Already RANMA is due to come to us via MANGA VIDEO in the not too distant future. Great news indeed, but so too is THE DIRTY PAIR. OK, I for one cannot wait to see that, but I can't help but feel that MANGA will exploit the violent (and sexual) nature of THE DIRTY PAIR in its advertising and marketing campaign for its release.

I had the chance recently to see MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO and it made a change to be presented with a story that did not involve killing or bloodshed, but instead presented a simple every-day story about every-day people that was brought to life by superb animation and artwork, and brilliant development of the characters. What I want to know is, why can't we have more of the same?

NOTE : ANIME SOAPBOX expresses the personal opinions of the writers only and does not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policy of this magazine, its publisher or editor. All material submitted for ANIME SOAPBOX is accepted and published on the basis that it is simply one individual's opinion.

Frederik Schodt has done more for Japan than a hundred ambassadors. Since graduating in Asian Studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1972, he has introduced many new Japanese works to the English-speaking world. Author of *MANGA! MANGA! THE WORLD OF JAPANESE COMICS*, he has become the world's foremost authority on Japanese popular culture. In the fifteen years since he began translating Japanese books, he has seen fandom grow from a tiny circle to an international phenomenon. His latest book, *AMERICA AND THE FOUR JAPANS*, examines East-West relations from the 'frontline' position of the translating trenches, and speculates on what the future holds for Japan and the West. AUK's Jonathan Clements tracked Fred from San Francisco to Los Angeles to Washington DC, seeking all the while the answer to the unanswerable question: what makes someone sell their soul for squiggly writing?

First Question is predictable and boring. What made you study Japanese?

Actually, that's a good question, because the answer is complicated. I first went to Japan in 1965, when I was fifteen. My father was a diplomat, so I had grown up mainly overseas, in Norway and Australia. I was put in an international school in Tokyo, and wanted to study Japanese, but my guidance counsellor didn't want me to. Although it's hard to believe in this day and age, she said it wouldn't do me much good in the future.

I had the same treatment from my high school. They wanted me to do French because Japanese was a 'waste of time', and that was in 1988!

Well, I studied French when I was in Japan, and never learned any Japanese. When I went to university in the States, I began studying Japanese, then soon went back to Japan as an exchange student and plunged into the language in a very intense way. Perhaps it was revenge on my high school guidance counsellor.

You and me both.

I love the Japanese language and make a living using it today, mainly as a translator and interpreter. Ironically, if I had studied it in high school, I might not have learned it as well. I have many non-Japanese high school friends who were fluent when they lived in Japan, but then they lost all interest in it, and the ability to speak it too.

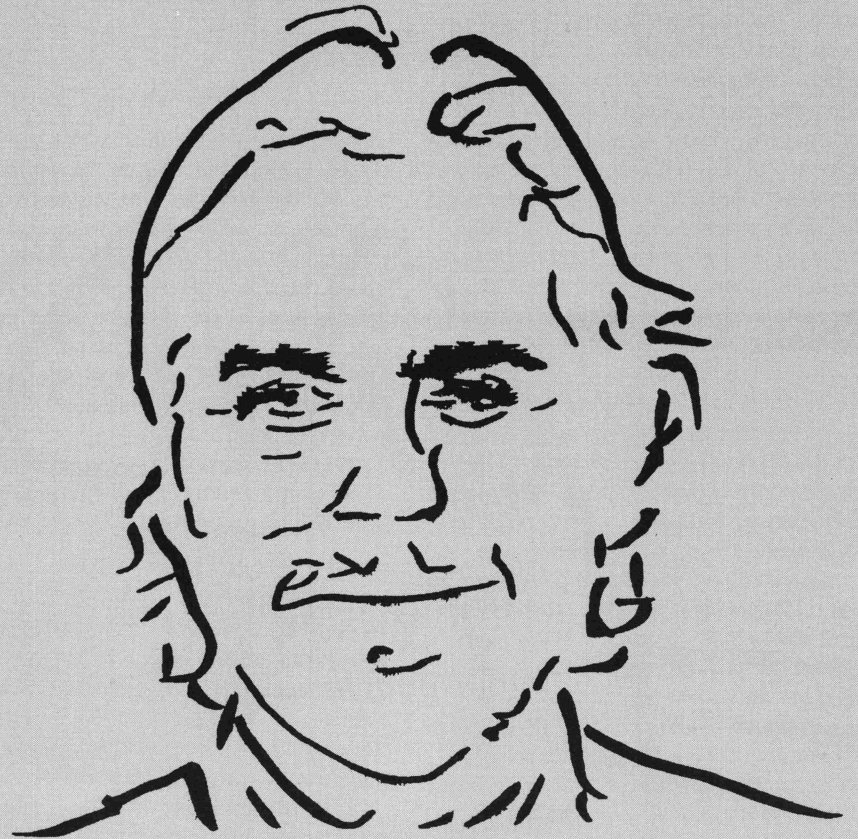
How did you get involved in Project Gen, your first translation job?

Actually, Jared Cook and I had translated several other comics such as Tezuka's *PHOENIX* and several of Leiji Matsumoto's war stories, but these have never been published. Working under the name of Dadakai, we had

dreamt of translating manga for the English speaking world, but we were years ahead of our time. Too bad we didn't start later. My first film-related work was to act as a consultant on Osamu Tezuka's *PHOENIX 2772*, with Jared Cook. In the early 80s, Jared began working in the production of commercials for Japanese TV and I became

And Project Gen?

My work with Project Gen was on a documentary comic called *BAREFOOT GEN*. It is based on Keiji Nakazawa's personal experience in WW2, when he was a child in Hiroshima and witnessed the A-bomb attack. It's a heart-wrenching tale, told as



Virtual Japan:

FRED SCHODT
THE INTERVIEW

with Jonathan Clements

quite involved in that for a while too. In the context of that work, I also worked on a feature film and a TV series, as an interpreter/co-ordinator-assistant to the director. I haven't done that sort of work for a long time, however, as I found it took me away from home too much. It was impossible to have a normal life, with normal relationships etc. In addition, it was physically very strenuous work, with long hours. It is very exciting work, though, and I don't regret having done it. I got to fly in lots of helicopters, visit exotic locations, meet famous people and so forth.

only a survivor could tell it. Project Gen is essentially a group of volunteers who felt that the world should know about Mr. Nakazawa's story, not only because it's a good story, but because in the nuclear age it is important for us to know what really happened at Hiroshima.

Are you a dedicated anti-nuclear campaigner?

No, not really. I do think that dropping A-bombs on Japan was a dreadful mistake, at least the way they were dropped. I also think that the original dream of the peaceful use

of nuclear power is nearly dead. In the course of my translation work I recently visited a place where the Federal government is considering the underground storage of waste materials. I was struck by the fact that, in planning for the disposal of nuclear waste, engineers have to think in terms not of ten or twenty years, but of tens of thou-

Did you approach Kodansha, or...

Sometime around the end of 1977, I put together a proposal. I showed it to a friend of mine, Peter Goodman, who was at the time working for Tuttle in Tokyo. He seemed interested, but that's as far as it went. At some point, Peter began working for

necessarily low-brow, popular culture trash like comic books.

Eventually I did sign a deal with KI. Given that KI is a fairly conservative company, I have to say that, in retrospect, the whole company was more flexible than I might have thought. Some of the illustrations in MANGA MANGA are fairly risqué, but they nonetheless made it into print. I think, frankly, that many of the staff at KI, including the art director, secretly loved working on a book about manga. Compared to their regular material, it was a little naughty.

It's been eleven years since you wrote MANGA MANGA. It was updated in 1987, but so much has happened since then. Will it be getting a power-up?

This, of course, is the question that everyone asks me, and also the most painful question because the answer's not easy. I was asked by KI to do a revision, but they turned around and decided they weren't interested after all. I think this attitude may change someday, but frankly with KI, one never knows.

Your next book, INSIDE THE ROBOT KINGDOM, was rather technical, but contained a large amount of information on Japanese SF. Did you already have your eye on GUNDAM?

Not really. That all came about by accident. I first got to know Yoshiyuki Tomino, the creator of GUNDAM, through an interpreting job when he gave a lecture in the USA. Later, when the GUNDAM project editor at Del Rey was looking for a translator, she called me.

So Tomino requested you?

No, the editor got my name from a referral at Lucasfilm, where I have also done quite a bit of work. Everything just seemed to click, and knowing Mr. Tomino helped a great deal when actually doing the translations, because I could ask his advice whenever I needed.

How did GUNDAM do?

Although the books were never advertised at all, they sold enough to make most publishers jealous. Alas, by Del Rey's mass market standards, sales do not justify a reprint. I've tried to tell them there is a whole new generation of GUNDAM fans out there now, but unless there is a GUNDAM film or video around in the US, I'm afraid they'll just let the novels go out of print. All you GUNDAM fans out there, write Del Rey!

I'm going to pick you up on your work with Lucasfilm. I see that your new book, AMERICA AND THE FOUR JAPANS, gets an endorsement from George Lucas himself. How have Lucasfilm made use of your talents?

FREDERIK L. SCHODT
Author, Inside the Robot Kingdom

AMERICA AND THE FOUR JAPANS



A concise guide to understanding how America's views of Japan have changed—and must continue to change for the sake of our economic and cultural future

sands of years. Frankly, I think any technology that forces us to make planning assumptions about the human race ten thousand years from now is too complicated for us to deal with.

How did you get the chance to write MANGA MANGA?

After Jared and I had translated several Japanese comics, we had difficulty getting them published. It occurred to me that non-Japanese needed to know what manga were, and the only way I could think of showing them was to write a book.

Kodansha International, and around 1979 or 1980 he wrote and asked if I could put together a couple of sample chapters he could pitch to KI.

And that was it?

No. I didn't hear a thing for ages. Clearly the chapters weren't very well written. I'd been living overseas too long and my writing skills in English were abominable. But beyond that, I think there was certain resistance within KI to the idea of doing a book on manga. In many ways, KI believes its mission is to 'introduce Japanese culture to the world', and what they want to introduce isn't



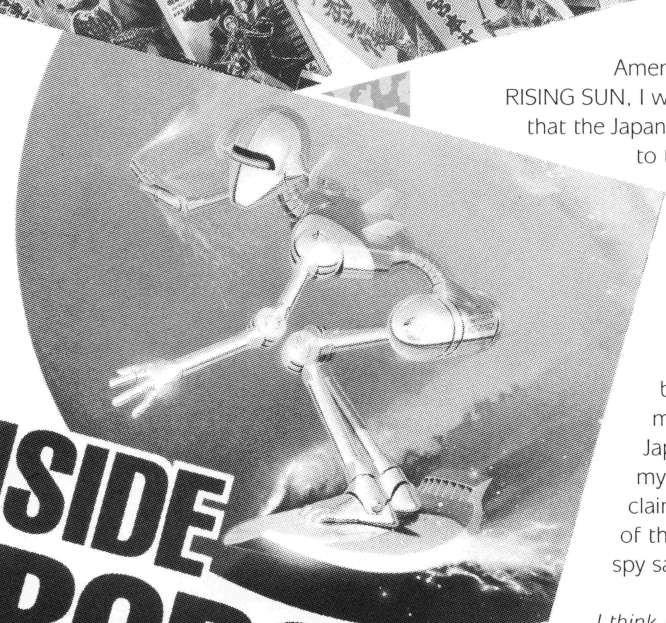
My involvement with Lucasfilm has been strictly as an interpreter. Most of the time I've been hired by Dentsu, which has helped set up some of Lucasfilm's Japan-related activities. I've always enjoyed interpreting for the Lucasfilm people, and especially George Lucas. Certainly one of the highlights of my interpreting career was to interpret on stage for Mr. Lucas at the 1989 opening ceremony of the Tokyo Disneyland STAR TOURS ride. When I finished my latest book, I obviously needed endorsements for it, and I tried to think of people who might be willing to write them. I thought it might resonate with him, but I honestly didn't expect him to respond. However, he graciously read the book and sent his endorsement. Frankly, I was very moved. It meant a lot to me personally, because he's someone I admire and respect.

He said that the value of AMERICA AND THE FOUR JAPANS was that it encouraged understanding in an age when cultures still do not properly communicate.

I certainly wouldn't expect two different cultures to communicate properly all the time, especially when they're as different as Japan and the US. Being different and having problems communicating doesn't mean cultures can't get along, however. America and Britain are very similar in many ways, but we've already been to war twice. Some of the most vicious disagreements actually occur between cultures that are extraordinarily similar, such as the Israelis and the Palestinians or the English and the Irish. Problems in communication keep people like me employed. On a cultural level, I think that problems in communication should also act as a flag, alerting us to the fact that we still have something to teach each other. I suppose this all sounds utterly naive and optimistic, but the alternative is too depressing.

The alternative?

In the end, I think the most dangerous thing that can happen between two different peoples is the dehumanisation of the 'Other', when one people decide for some reason that another people are completely alien or sub-human. This seems to be a typical mental process required before killing them or going to war.



Japan, Mechatronics, and the Coming Robotopia
 "One of the best Sci-Tech books of 1988" - Library Journal
 Frederik L. Schodt

RISING SUN depicts the Japanese as alien invaders. Does that make it a bad film?

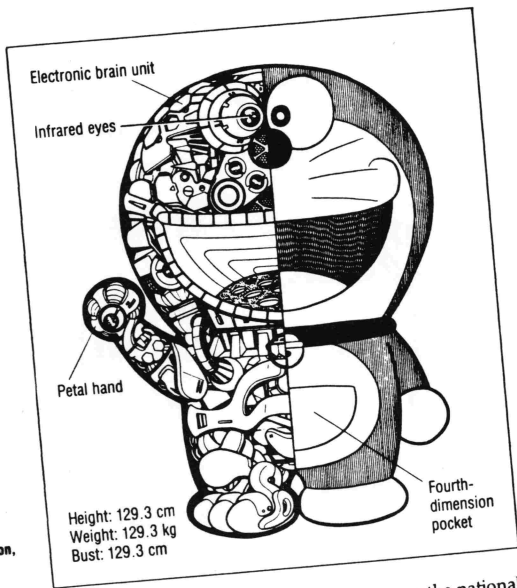
I personally thought RISING SUN was a stupid film. It was simply poorly made. The opening scene with the parody of the Tora-san films and Kurosawa's YOJIMBO, was brilliant, but the rest of the film quickly degenerated into silly stereotyping. The book was much better than the movie, because it had a clearly-defined point of view, interesting information and a clever construction. I admire Crichton as a novelist, but I still think the book was a dangerous mix of political polemic and cleverly-crafted, page-turner mystery. The views of Japanese people expressed in it reminded me of the way Americans used to view the Russians - as some sort of invincible and amoral supermen. If I were the average

American or Brit reading RISING SUN, I would be convinced that the Japanese were plotting to take over the world, and that they had planted bugs in my TV and phone and were recording everything I said. The book also reminded me of paranoid Japanese friends in my student days, who claimed the same sort of thing about American spy satellites.

I think that still goes on today.

Yes. Frankly, I think the level of America-bashing in Japan is just as high as the Japan-bashing in the US. It's just that in Japan the more extreme views are rarely translated into English. The converse is not true of course; any book that trashes Japan in the US or UK is quickly translated into Japanese, and probably sells more copies in Japanese than English.

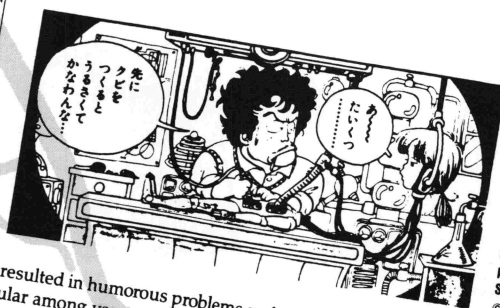
Your book AMERICA AND THE FOUR



Fujiko-Fujio's Doraemon, the robot cat. © 1970 Fujiko Fujio.

machines. The influence of such characters on the national psyche far outweighs their number. Doraemon, created by comic artists Fujiko-Fujio in 1970, is an example. A cute, endearing robot cat, Doraemon lived with a young boy named Nobita in a normal family setting, having materialized in Nobita's desk drawer one day after being sent through the fourth dimension from the twenty-second century. Nobita was rather clumsy and a former in school, so much so that he had numerous problems for his descendants. To correct these problems, his grandfather sent him Doraemon, a robot cat from the future used as guardians. Doraemon is intelligent and always looking out for Nobita. However, he was of flawed construction and provided little help. A hint from Tanku Tankuro of the 19th century led to Doraemon a walking toy box and gadget pouch from which he could produce various gadgets, which he would share

80 BEFORE INDUSTRIAL ROBOTS



Arare, bored by the slow pace of her inventor, Dr. Slump, starts to bug him. © 1980 Akira Toriyama.

resulted in humorous problems and proved immensely popular among young children. Within a very short span of time Doraemon became a household word, what the Japanese call an "idol." By 1985 over fifty-five million copies of the story had been published in paperback form; the series had become a major

JAPANS reflects your own optimism about Japan...

And my fears.

Is there anywhere where you feel the Japan-bashers could be right?

Trade problems may be the least of our worries in the long run. There are all sorts of things that could go wrong in Japan very easily. Japan is a democracy, but it is also an emperor system, and no-one should ever confuse an emperor system with a monarchy. They are completely different. There are many people in Japan, both young and old, who still see their nation as having a 'special destiny'. It is an attitude that I find quite pervasive in the technology industries. It is a nationalistic attitude, a belief that Japan is destined to lead the world to a shining future. I'm optimistic about Japan, but I'd be the last person to suggest that there are no problems on the horizon.

Something very interesting in recent times has been the sheer volume of manga we can read in English. For the first time, average

Japanese and Western teenagers are reading the same books, watching the videos and playing with the same computers. Does this bode well for the future?

Manga and anime may be part of a truly global, universal culture that's emerging. Americans like to think of themselves as the creators of a sort of global pop culture, but it'll never be truly global if it's only a one-way street. I think Japan's influence on the world in the form of anime, manga and so on, is an extremely healthy thing. It's been interesting to see how young Western kids who have watched a lot of anime or read a lot of manga, can relate to Japanese so much better than those who haven't. They've been exposed to another mentality, and another way of thinking, and once that has happened, it's a lot easier to relate to any other culture.

Japan was 'in' during the cyberpunk period, but will tomorrow's children pay more attention to RISING SUN than AKIRA?

I don't think so. These things go in increasingly shorter cycles. One year Japan is 'in',

Books

MANGA MANGA: THE WORLD OF JAPANESE COMICS.

1983, Kodansha International. (Updated 1987) INSIDE THE ROBOT KINGDOM: JAPAN, MECHATRONICS AND THE COMING ROBOTOPOLIS.

1988, Kodansha International. AMERICAN AND THE FOUR JAPANS: FRIEND, FOE, MODEL, MIRROR.

1994, Stone Bridge Press.

Translated books

THE GUNDAM MOBILE SUIT Vols. 1-3 (Yoshiyuki Tomino).

1990-91, Del Rey.

GAJU STORIES (US Title: MY BOY) (Makino Shiina)

1992, Kodansha America.

JACK AND BETTY FOREVER (Yoshinori Shimizu)

1993, Kodansha English Library.

Translated comics (in book form)

BAREFOOT GEN: A CARTOON STORY OF HIROSHIMA, Vol 2 (Keiji Nakazawa) (trans. w/ Jared Cook).

1979, Project Gen.

THE ROSE OF VERSAILLES Vols. 1 & 2 (Riyoko Ikeda).

1981, Sanyusha.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT (Osamu Tezuka)

1990, Japan Times.

Other comics translated

ORION Vols. 1-6 (Masamune Shirow)

1993, Dark Horse Comics. (w/ Toren Smith).

GHOST IN THE SHELL (Masamune Shirow)

1994, Dark Horse Comics. (w/ Toren Smith).

the next year it's 'out'. It's a completely naive, self-deluded type of thinking. In a year or so the situation will probably reverse again. I think the important thing to realise is that Japan isn't changing as fast as we think it is. Instead, our needs are changing. We 'need' Japan to be 'in' or 'out' for a variety of reasons. To prod ourselves to greater efforts, to congratulate ourselves on our 'superiority' etc. and the media graciously responds to our needs. The Japan we see in the media, therefore, increasingly becomes a 'virtual' Japan, the image of which we can manipulate as the need arises. Of course, there's a real Japan out there, too, but it's not necessarily the one that people are interested in. In the meantime, manga and anime will become more and more popular, and eventually the fan scene will be co-opted by some smart corporation out to make money.

Let's hope they co-opt us with it. I have to disappear now, but thank you for taking the time to talk to us.

It's been fun. Have fun while you're disappeared

ANIME

Oh My Goddess!

Animeigo, AT094-002, 29 mins

It is a problem that many academic types face. You spend so much time overworked by your faculty, undervalued by your peers, maligned by polite society and misunderstood by just about every member of the opposite sex not related to you. So it is understandable that your self esteem might be prone to slipping "somewhat". But the question is, how do you balance the need to "get a life" with the fact that if you don't finish your degree your parents will finish you, terminally?

Morisato Kei'ichi's solution to the problem is as unusual as it is inadvertant as, in an attempt to dial himself a lunch, he ends up face to face with a pretty Goddess who seems determined to grant his heart's desire and he simply wishes himself a girlfriend. At that point however, events become a little "uncontrolled" as Kei'ichi and Belldandy (his new found adorant) are cast out of his strictly men only dorm to make their own way of things. But, what is a poor college boy to do? Homeless, confused and with only a motorcycle and a Goddess (a pretty naive one at that) as his sole companions, the only thing to do, it would seem, is to hope for some "Ultimate Force" to intervene and sort things out for him.

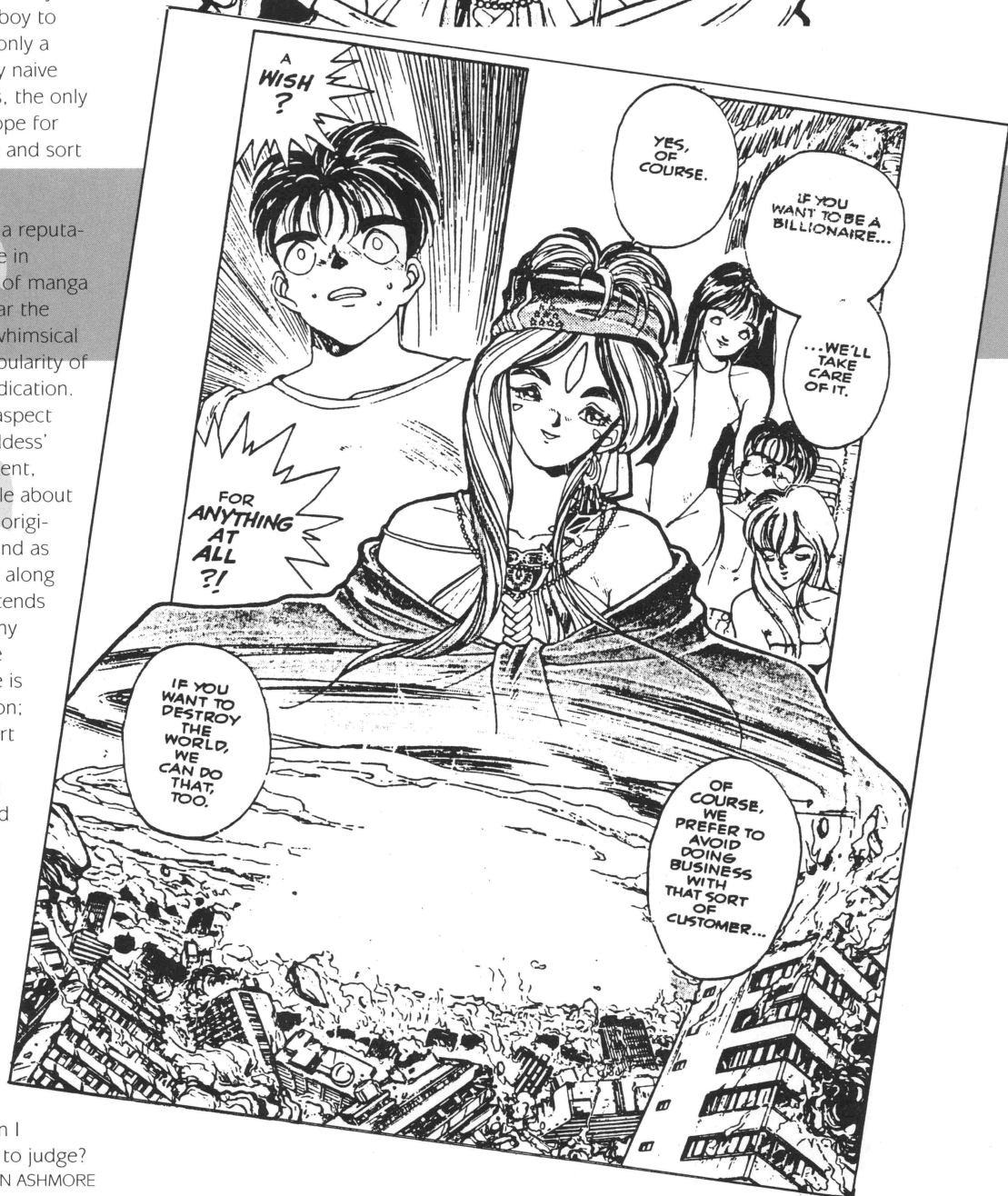
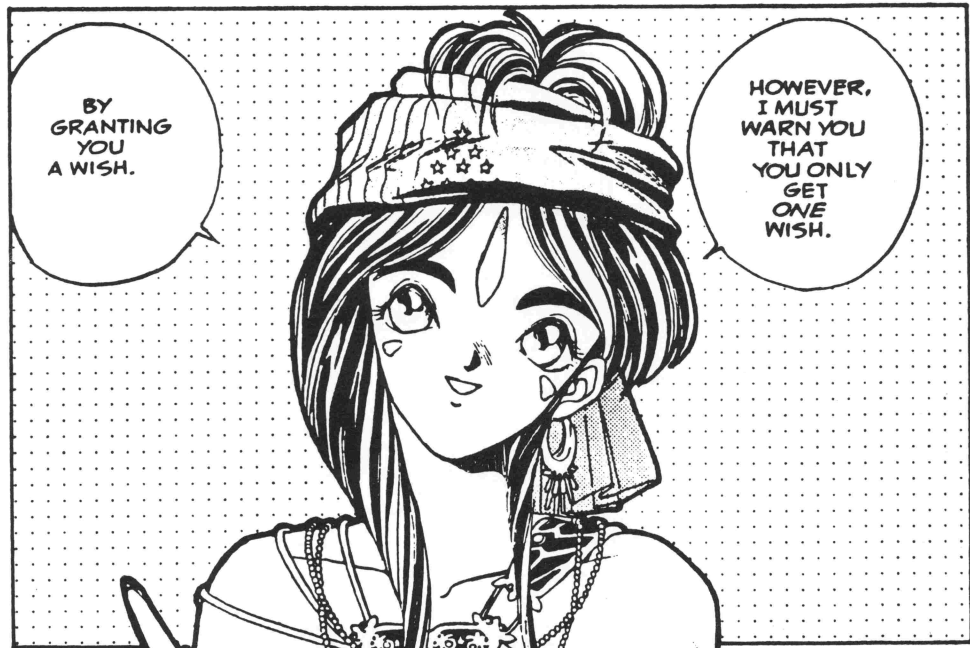
Funny I should mention that!

Oh My Goddess! has something of a reputation as a long standing fan favourite in America and Japan (with collectors of manga and garage kits) and it would appear the affection for Fujishima Kousuke's whimsical characters has not faded, if the popularity of this animated version is any true indication. That though, is the most puzzling aspect about this whole thing. Oh My Goddess' status cannot be denied, it is excellent, almost divine but why? There is little about the concept that can be classed as original, the storyline is pretty generic and as about as predictable as they come, along with the fact that the whole thing tends to amble about almost devoid of any sense of pace. However, to impose such strictures on this title I believe is to attempt to find reason in emotion; in short this is a matter for the heart not the head. It almost oozes "feel good", is so positive that if it was a breath test it would get you banned for eternity and is capable of disarming most nervous systems in about 2 minutes.

Maybe this is not for the hardcore "guns, gals, and gore" brigade but at least it proves, once more that anime need not be problematic to be popular and in Oh My Goddess' case it demonstrates that it is not merely a knee jerk reaction to such material.

Well, at least I like it, but then again I like Rose of Versailles so who am I to judge?

DARREN ASHMORE



HARD BOILED

An extra-special competition this time - win HARD BOILED goodies!

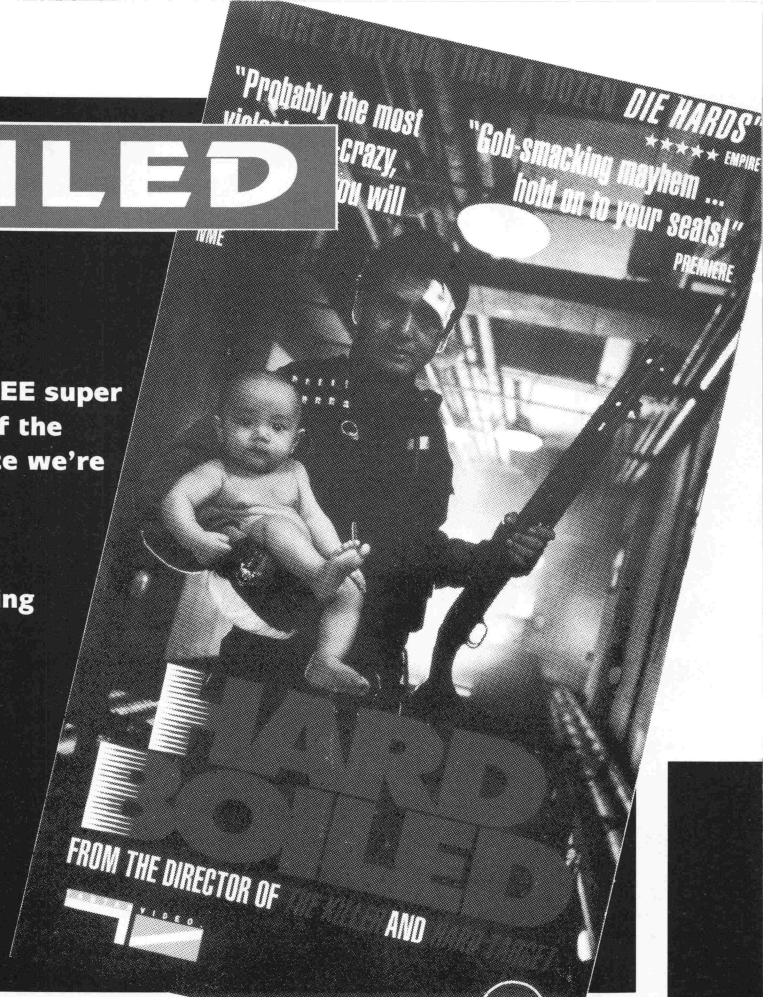
Those nice people at TARTAN VIDEO have given us THREE super sets of HARD BOILED t-shirt, baseball cap and a copy of the sensational video, and even though they're soooooo nice we're still offering them to you readers!

(Aren't we great? - Helen) (No, we're mugs! - John)

YOU can win a set of HARD BOILED goodies by answering just one simple question :

NAME ONE OTHER JOHN WOO FILM RELEASED IN THE UK

Easy, or what? Put the answer on a postcard with your name and address and send it to HARD BOILED, ANIME UK MAGAZINE, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7DF to reach us not later than 31st August 1994. First three out of the hat get the goodies!



Oh My Goddess!

MANGA

NIGERO! MANGA NO KAWAII!

Or roughly translated "Run for your lives! Cute comics!" Yes, after much waiting and hoping and gnashing of otaku teeth, the talented folks at Dark Horse Comics and Studio Proteus have releases Kosuke FUJISHIMA's fan-favourite, OH MY GODDESS! Originally appearing in Kodansha's COMIC MORNING in serial form, GODDESS! is in fact Fujishima's second runaway hit, the first being YOU'RE UNDER ARREST! (also known as YOU'RE BUSTED!) a cute coptale of two policewomen working Tokyo's freaky streets which debuted in COMIC MORNING PARTY. More about this "petite police story" later ... I have to say that OH MY GODDESS! isn't a book I would normally have gone for, my personal tastes being balanced between hard-edged action and tough drama, but I was surprised by the book's refreshing feel. It's lightweight and enjoyable, with an honest storyline pretending to be nothing more than just what it is. A lot has been said about Kosuke Fujishima's work in general and OH MY GODDESS! in particular by manga readers and fans in the 'know', and now that the book is open to a wider audience we will see if it has the appeal to pull in a greater

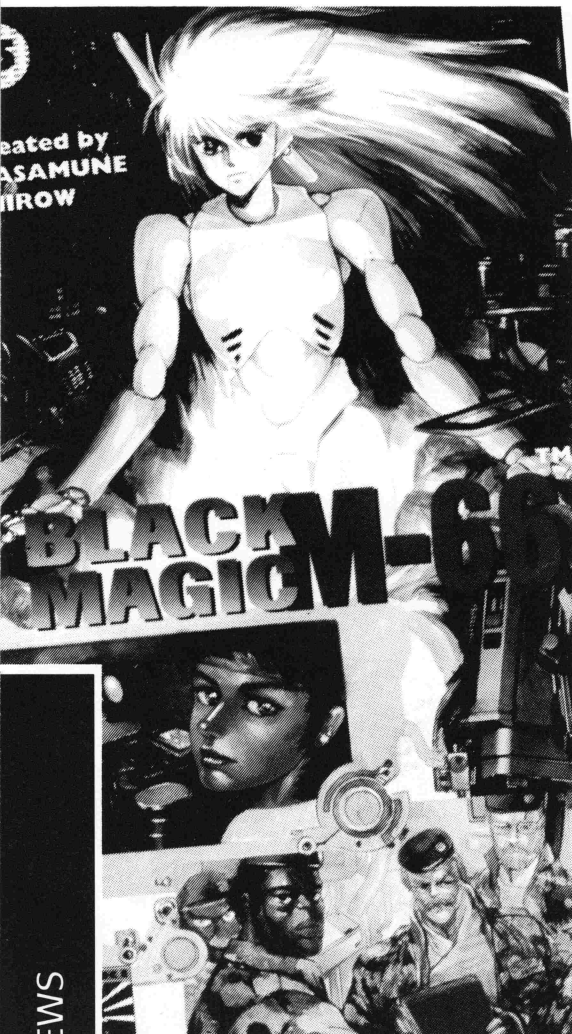
slice of the market than just the hard-core otaku who have previously been its devotees. The tale of OH MY GODDESS is a tale of woe and woe-mance (ahem) in much the same slapstick sit-com mould as VIDEO GIRL AI, Rumiko TAKAHASHI's URUSEI YATSURA, MAISON IKKOKU and RANMA 1/2, all of which enjoy great popularity in Japan. In a seedy men-only college dorm, hard-done-by and terminally shy student Keiichi MORISATO makes the mistake of his life when he lets his fingers to the walking and mis-dials a phone number, accidentally putting him in touch with the otherworldly "Goddess Technical Help Line" who offer to grant a wish for him. No 0898 number this, for when Morisato jokingly asks the Goddess Belldandy (who steps through the mirror above his bed, natch) to stay with him always, the wish is granted and he's saddled with a babe who just happens to be a Norse deity in her spare time. Chucked out of his allboy lodgings for harbouring a girl, Keiichi and Belldandy hop onto his motorcycle and ride into the night, and into trouble. We've seen this idea before - the ordinary guy with a bizarre and unexpected twist forced into his lovelife; but Fujishima goes a way to making it a little different, not least

with the artwork. The style is very clean and crisp, and the character designs have a very realistic look, highlighting Fujishima's eye for 'everyday' textures and feels. In contrast, Belldandy's costuming and that of her ethereal cohorts Urd, Skuld and Marller is positively wild, hair blazing like storms of colour over outfits that would make any Dior designer gape. About the only gripe I can find is that the layout is often a little twodimensional, seemingly flat against the backgrounds. Fujishima's other popular manga title YOU'RE UNDER ARREST! (mentioned above) was to have been a back-up strip in the GODDESS! book, but it's missing from the six-part series. We can but wonder if it has been cancelled, postponed, or perhaps held back to arrive later as a separate book. Certainly the appearance of books like this in the West will not only please the current manga fans, it will also hopefully bring on board a whole load of new readers who might not otherwise have tried manga books, drawn in by the easy-going nature of GODDESS! Coupled with the added awareness brought on by the AnimEigo video release of the series in the U.S.A., OH MY GODDESS! has all the makings of a great hit.

JIM SWALLOW

VIDEO

REVIEWS



BLACK MAGIC M-66

Kiseki KIS 94005, 50m, cert 15

The action in M-66 is stunning, and the scene in which the two M-66 combat droids demolish a military roadblock may be one of the all-time anime magic moments. The ALIENS/TERMINATOR steals are obvious and enjoyable, and the whole one-shot OAV is a must for any serious anime fan's collection. This all has to be said in advance, because the nuts and bolts of KISEKI's production don't really do justice to Masamune Shirow's cyberpunk classic.

All credit is due to KISEKI for bringing this fan favourite to British screens, though why they didn't deign to release the subtitled edition (as they did with GUNBUSTER) we'll never know. Instead they have taken the American sub script and 'adapted' it into a dubbed version. They will eventually follow on with a subtitled version, as they have with UROTSUKIDOJI III.

This viewer has to express dissatisfaction with the KISEKI version of M-66. Lip sync is poor in places, but the main fault with the dubbing is the 'mid-Atlantic' accents. Are American fans really so ignorant as to demand American accents as a prerequisite to buying a tape? And are British fans really

so reluctant to buy tapes that don't have American voices on them? Even to this uneducated British reviewer, many of the 'American' accents in M66 were flat and unconvincing, scattered with tell-tale British vowels. American dialects are even more diverse than British ones, and there is a distinct difference between a Texan drawl and a New Jersey screech; actors mix them at their peril. The other problem with a forced dialect is that the effort of maintaining it diverts the actor's attention from putting emotion into the part, something which has cropped up in other UK dubs, noticeably MANGA VIDEO's WICKED CITY. To a genuine American the voices will probably appear laughable. Possibly more rehearsal time would have ironed out these kinks. This is the only unforgiveable error in M-66, a production which is otherwise well up to standard. But die-hard fans are advised to do what they probably will have done anyway: stick with the sub.

JONATHAN CLEMENTS

TOKYO BABYLON,

MANGA VIDEO MANV 1048, '60 mins approx', cert 15
Anyone buying this tape on the basis of the back cover notes would be justified in asking for their money back - there is no phone sex, gang rape or sinister religious practice; this is not to deny that such things may indeed occur in Tokyo but you won't see them in this video. Instead, there is a plot by nasty piece of work Nagumo to climb to the top of the MCC Corporation by ensuring that every executive above him in the Project 5 chain of command has fatal accidents in which he is never implicated. Teenage bishonen medium Subaru, head of an ancient clan and a sweet, diffident and prettier Boy George clone, is called in by corporation president Mimura to solve the mystery, but Mimura meets with an "accident" before Subaru can get to work. Again, the back cover is misleading - the suspicious young woman is not Mimura's sister; her sibling is Nomura, architect on Project 5 and suspicious of Nagumo, and she sets out on her course of revenge when he too meets with an "accident". Unfortunately she is meddling with forces she can't even spell correctly, let alone control, and in order to protect her Subaru has to face Nagumo alone. Luckily, the kindly vet who's a friend of the family and sweet on his sister has great pow-

ers and steps in to save the day.
TOKYO BABYLON is very, very pretty. (You'd expect nothing less from CLAMP.) The characters are nicely designed and as well developed as they can be within the time available - which, incidentally, is closer to 45 minutes than 60. (If you want the full story, go to the manga.) Subaru is an unusual, vulnerable and appealing hero. But - and it's a big but, given the emphasis of the back cover notes on which many buyers base their choices - it isn't in the same family as LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND or DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS. Buy it if you like well-designed characters, clean animation and psychic battles with a reasonable amount of gore. If you wanted the phone sex and gang rape, tough luck.

HELEN MCCARTHY





THE GUYVER DATA 5,

MANGA VIDEO, MANV 1038, 26 mins approx, cert 15
DEATH OF THE GUYVER, it says, and accordingly we see Sho dissolve into a sticky mess before the eyes of his friend and love-interest. We also see her realise what the rest of us could have told her from Data 1 in - that her slimy classmate Makashima is Not To Be Trusted; in fact he's heir to the former head of Kronos Japan, and now that Dad has been turned into a nasty and particularly unstable Zoanoid he can't wait to step into the old man's shoes. The former Makashima Senior confronts Sho in the clearing where he first mutated into The Guyver and attacks with an enzyme that dissolves Guyver armour. It seems all is lost, but with another episode to come and the mysterious Guyver 3 not responding to Sho's desperate pleas for help, who can guess what will happen next?

Probably anyone with a mental age above 12 who's read a bit of science fiction, actually. The GUYVER is not a very good story and not very well animated, and at about ú13 an hour is a very expensive way to collect video. But the Zoanoid monsters are great fun, and the little datafile at the end of the tape giving stats on several new Zoanoids and photos of the brilliant models by MAX FACTORY et al are almost worth the money in themselves. Almost.

HELEN McCARTHY

ROBOTECH VOL 1,

KISEKI, KIS 93024, time & cert tbc

Created by Carl Macek for Harmony Gold, this series massively boosted the US anime fandom boom and influenced a whole generation of kids who have since grown up but remained fans at heart. It's impossible to exaggerate the importance of ROBOTECH to present-day Western fandom. Based on three classic Japanese series (MACROSS, ORGUSS and MOSPEADA) and edited to remove what its creator regards as "ethno-centric" elements, it has been alternately reviled and hymned by fans ever since, to the extent that it's now a virtual impossibility to review ROBOTECH impartially.

Following on from the release of CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS, this gives fans yet another version of the Minmay/Ichijo story, though our hero is now renamed Rick Hunter. The slower pace of the series gives more room for character development and fills in more of the background. The character designs by Mikimoto Haruhiko look a little dated now

but the mecha hold up well, particularly the fabulous Valkyries, still one of the greatest mecha designs of all time. There are quite a few songs in the series but perhaps because they're scattered over so many episodes they aren't as obtrusive as in CLASH/MACROSS THE MOVIE.

Romance, space opera, high drama, courage, conflict, adventure - MACROSS had it all and ROBOTECH repackaged it for an American audience. You're buying a legend here. This reviewer personally prefers MACROSS in its original Japanese version, but the American edit has millions of devotees worldwide. And there's not a tentacle in sight, so you don't have to worry about your kid sister picking it up - a trend to be welcomed and encouraged.

HELEN McCARTHY

THE ADVENTURE DUO,

KISEKI, KIS 93009, 52 mins approx, cert 18

The forced retitling of this video - a much sillier nod in the direction of our censorious political establishment than the 2 minutes of cuts which the BBFC also inflicted - is more worrying than any amount of fuss about its content. In this post-UROTSUKDOJI world it's increasingly hard to shock; seen one demonic rape, seen 'em all.

ADVENTURE DUO (YOUJYUSENSEN in Japanese) is written by Maeda Toshio and made by the same team as UROTSUKIDOJI. It has, to judge from the first of its three parts, a much more coherent storyline with a more conventional narrative structure, and just as much gore and viciousness, though zombies are substituted for demons and man-beasts and the setting is the Second World War rather than the present or future.

Unfortunately, and again to judge only from part 1, which is all this reviewer has seen, it's not very good. The animation is limited, the character design not very striking, and the story, starting from a potentially interesting premise - what happens if you power up a World War II computer and it turns out to have more than just a few old codes still active on the hard drive - rapidly turns dull. Unless you really enjoy animated sex and violence for its own sake you may well find yourself bored. Of course, none of this will deter the diehard horror freak for whom the series is made, and massive sales can be expected.

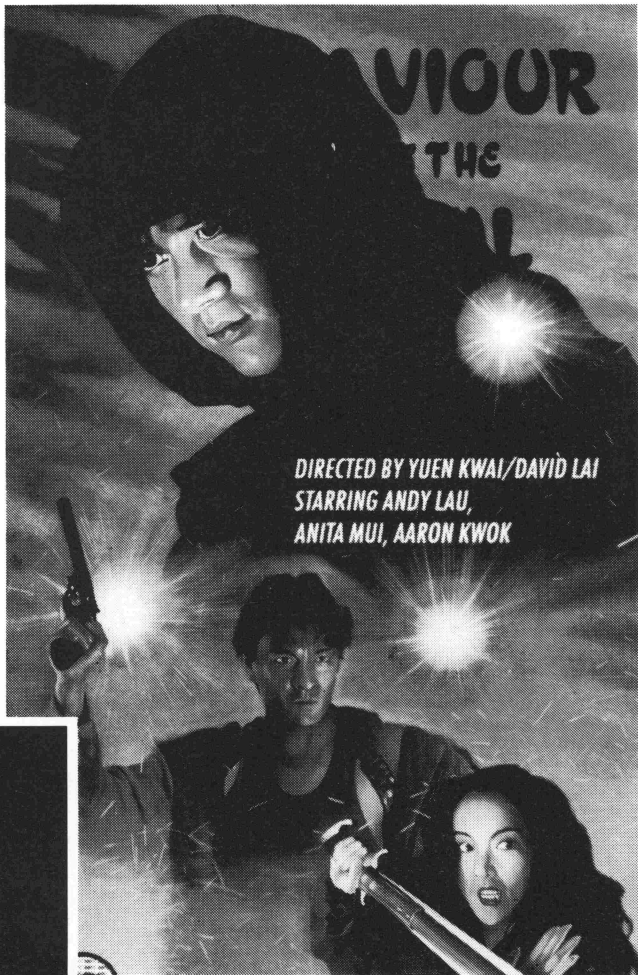
HELEN McCARTHY

INCOMING! release roundup

11 July	Guyver Data Four	28m £5.99 cert PG	Manga Video
	Devilman 1	60m cert 18	Manga Video
	Maris the Wondergirl	50m cert PG	Manga Video
22 July	Gaiarth 1 sub (general release)	45m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects
	Gaiarth 2 sub (Virgin release)	45m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects
25 July	Gunbuster 5/6 (sub)	55m £10.99 cert PG	Kiseki
	KO Beast Century Warriors	90m £12.99 cert PG	AUK Video
8 August	Urusei Yatsura Movie 4 (sub)	100m £12.99 cert 15	Anime Projects
	Guyver Data Five	28m £5.99 cert PG	Manga Video
	Tokyo Babylon	45m £8.99 cert 15	Manga Video
22 August	Ambassador Magma 5/6	50m £10.99 cert 15	Kiseki
	Overfiend III part 3 (dub)	50m £9.99 cert 18	Kiseki
	Robotech vol 1 (eps 1-3)	75m £12.99 cert PG	Kiseki
29 August	Bubblegum Crisis 1-4 (sub)	£12.99 ea. cert PG	Anime Projects
	Urusei Yatsura Movie 5 (sub)	85m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects

(Unfortunately guys: - all information is subject to change!)





SAVIOUR OF THE SOUL

Made In Hong Kong 90m cert 15 £14.99
d Yuen Kwai/David Lai.

Raymond Chandler once said: 'If in doubt, have a man enter the room with a gun...'. In a Hong Kong action movie, the man will have *two* guns (preferably Berettas) and perform a triple somersault, two spin kicks and a back flip - and that's before the action starts. Their films also lead the world in the audacity and technical ability of their stunt men - anyone who has seen a Jackie Chan film can testify to the extraordinary physical ability of even the lowliest team member. Even the lowest budget quickie will have action sequences to equal the best of the Western crop. When Jackie Chan worked in America, he had to take his own stunt team with him - the locals couldn't move fast enough! Hong Kong used to be derided for making cheap exploitation movies, but no more. Hong Kong cinema has grown up - they now make *expensive* exploitation movies (just like Hollywood!), full of style and depth, while retaining the raw energy of the past. So what has all this to do with an anime magazine? Most fans of

ROUGE

ICA Projects 92m cert 15 £12.99 d Stanley Kwan
w Lee Bik-Wah

A film of subtlety and charm, beautifully photographed and acted, skilfully contrasting present day Hong Kong with that of 1934, where Chan (Leslie Cheung) meets and falls in love with Fleur (Anita Mui) in a Chinese pleasure house. Their love is doomed, however, as Chan's family refuses to let him marry a courtesan, or to follow what he believes is his true vocation in the Peking Opera. They want him to marry someone else, and take Fleur as a second wife in two years time. The couple don't want to wait, also secretly unsure whether their love could last... They decide to commit suicide together, and meet in the afterlife.

In 1987, Fleur wanders into a newspaper office to place a wanted ad - she has been dead for over 50 years, but Chan hasn't turned up yet. Can she find him before the corporeal world overwhelms her? Anita Mui is superb as the frail ethereal lover (every ghost should look like this!) and Leslie Cheung a perfect foil as the romantic, but weak-willed Chan. As contrast, a modern young couple are forced to re-evaluate their own life and love in the face of a passion that defies death itself. Unusually for a Hong Kong movie, the style is subtle and restrained, with no martial arts elements (except in the final scene, where the backdrop of a modern kung fu film forms a perfect metaphor for the melancholy loss of the past, and an ironic counterpoint to a 'film' ghost). This is not a film for action fans, but deserves to find an audience.

JOHN SPENCER

anime have a strong appreciation of visual style and fantasy, and fans of action orientated anime are sure to find an echo in the live action movies coming out of Hong Kong. **SAVIOUR OF THE SOUL** gives exactly the same viewing pleasure as the best anime - breathtaking visuals, beautiful design and not only the stunning obligatory action sequences but also moments of great lyrical beauty.

Old Eagle's last request before asking his disciple Silver Fox (Aaron Kwok) to kill him, (and thus bequeathing his considerable supernatural powers), is for Fox to avenge his downfall at the hands of a group of 'city soldiers': May (Anita Mui); Ching (Andy Lau); Siu (Kenny Bee); and May's sister (Anita Mui), who is developing a bullet that removes oxygen from the air in the best traditions of crazed scientists everywhere.

May and Ching are in love, but in order to save Ching from the same fate as Siu, who was killed by Fox, she leaves, saying she doesn't love him. Ching searches and eventually finds her at the same time Fox does... From then on it's all stops out for an apocalyptic finale, as Fox poisons May with black magic. In 24 hours she will become a 'Terrible Angel', totally subservient to Fox's will. Can Ching rescue May? Will there love survive? Does this plot sound familiar from Japanese animation?

Mixing an anime sensibility with the vision of a Ridley Scott, this is a highly recommended introduction to the best that Hong Kong has to offer. Released in letter-box format, with Chinese/English subtitles and copious liner notes.

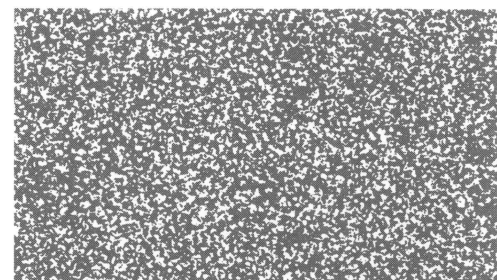
JOHN SPENCER

THE KILLER

Made in Hong Kong 102m cert 18 £14.99 d John Woo
Probably John Woo's greatest film, a glorious saga of love, friendship and redemption, made with style, panache and a heck of a lot of ammunition. World-weary, sensitive hard-man Chow Yun Fat is the killer of the title, who accidentally blinds a night club singer with muzzle flash during his latest hit. Desperate to make amends, he takes on one last job, to make enough money to finance her operation. He succeeds, but the client refuses to pay, and sends a team of hit men after him. Maverick cop Danny Lee is also after him, and the heart of the film charts their growing friendship and mutual respect, culminating in an awesome shoot-out at the climax, when Lee's bad good guy and Fat's good bad guy together take on the bad bad guys. A classic of the genre which deserves more space than we can give it here.

JOHN SPENCER

RIDING BEAN



RIDING BEAN

Anime Projects, 46min, cert 18, £12.99

With the way that dubbing has gained in quality, respectability (maybe this should be "street cred") and ultimately popularity over this last year or so, it did not come as too great a surprise to hear that AnimEigo Inc. had decided to "test fire" their own product, so to speak. The result of this has been the reworking of one of their (already) most popular titles, RIDING BEAN (hopefully the first of many).

Available in a subtitled form in both the UK and America for quite a while, it is one of those few titles to have passed into legend, but just to recap:

Ace courier, Bean Bandit (the sort of driver who has difficulty FINDING the brake pedal, as he rarely uses it), his "semi automatic" sidekick Rally Vincent (a little like Marilyn Monroe though in her case blondes definitely have more guns!) and their silent partner Buffy (a car that has already frightened 2

Dodge Vipers to death and given several Trans Ams cylinder seizure) find themselves drawn into a rather shady hostage drop that swiftly turns into a rather excessive shootout and makes our confused trio not only the fall guys for the real villains but also the target for just about every policeman in Chicago (probably looking for a bit of payback after the Blues Brothers). Kenichi Sonoda and crew really cut loose on this choice morsel as it succeeds in pulling together just about every car cliché ever and pumps out a high octane visual treat, backed by an excellent soundtrack and now some pretty good dubbing. Don't think I am letting it rest at that though - "pretty good" does not mean without flaw, sad though that may be. I think the biggest gripe I have is that comparing the sub and dub side by side, it seems that in re-recording the effects track and music have become a little muted and fuzzy detracting from the urgency of certain scenes (audible FX being a strong aid to suspension of disbelief in animation). Other than that, the only other things of note are perhaps the odd sense of pace that the English script has compounded by a delivery that is a little stilted in places. However, this is AnimEigo's entree into the field and to be honest I believe it stands slightly above much of the current competition, so it is to be hoped they will not consider the exercise a waste of time - I certainly do not - as it is nice to think of their ENTIRE back catalogue going through the same treatment!

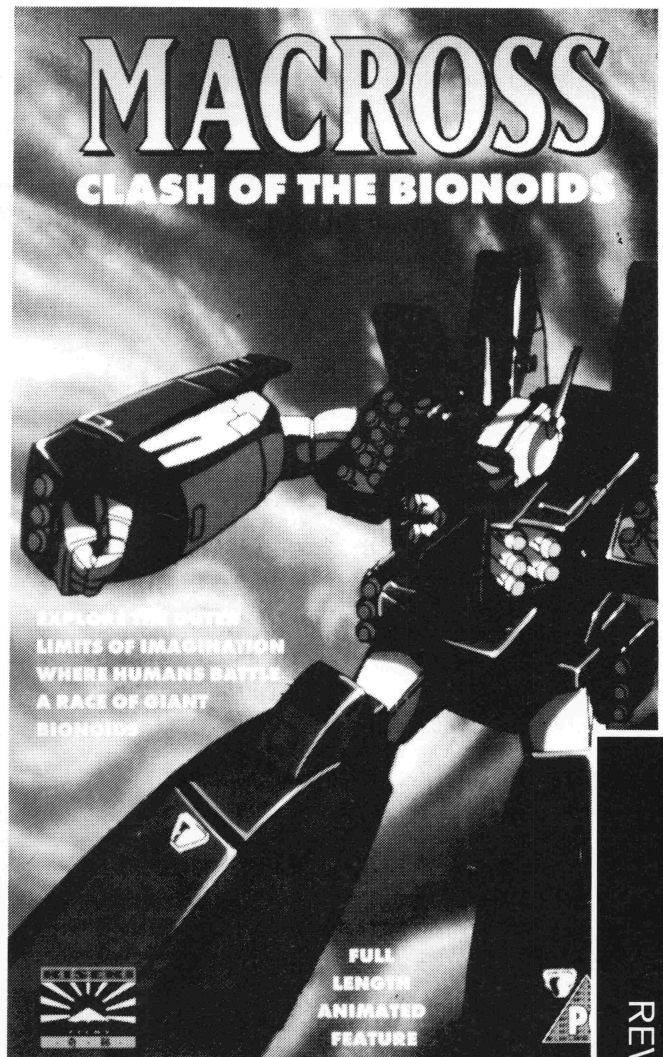
DARREN ASHMORE

CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS

Kiseki, 110m cert PG £12.99

Is it visually stunning? Yes. Is it worth buying? Yes. Is it Clash of the Bionoids? No... However to explain this, we need to go back in time. Super Dimensional Fortress Macross was originally a 27 episode tv series (later extended to 36) which first aired in 1983. Developed by Studio Nue and featuring chara designs by Mikimoto, and mecha by Kawamori, it told the story of young pilot Hikaru Ichijo, and his tangled love triangle with young wannabee idol singer Lyn Minmay and very feminine military officer Misa Hayase, caught up in the conflict between the vast space fortress, SDF1 Macross, and invading aliens. The series was the first appearance of the anime idol singer, which eventually culminated in today's Legends of the Hyper Cute; and also the first appearance of transforming mecha. In 1984 the story made it to the movie screen as the big budget feature film 'Macross: Do You Remember Love?', using state of the art techniques. It was a condensed version of the original story, featuring the same love triangle as the tv series, and many of the same events.

Unfortunately, this compression (almost a synopsis) does work against involvement with the characters, and the origin of the space fortress is not explained either. The viewer is plunged straight into the thick of the story, as Hikaru and Minmay are trapped together after a space battle. Shortly after release, the film was dubbed into English in Hong Kong for release in Japan as an educational resource under the title 'Super Space Fortress Macross'. It was this version that was picked up and released in the United States. However, as everyone knows western audiences will not watch 'cartoons' for longer than 90mins (a fate familiar to other butchered anime such as Warriors of the Wind!), it was arbitrarily cut and retitled 'Clash of the Bionoids'. And so, by long and tortuous means we come to Kiseki's release of, Clash of the Bionoids - and lo and behold it was revealed to be the wondrous uncut version: Super Space Fortress Macross! A boon to anime fans everywhere, as it can truly be called a classic of anime that has worn remarkably well. It's contrasting mixture of schmaltz and action was extraordinarily successful and every frame is beautifully composed and painted. The action, when it comes, is fast and furious and rarely equalled since. It's got tragedy, it's got comedy, it's got romance, it's got songs. It's even got tragi-comic romance songs.] And for freeze frame fans - check out Hikaru's final missile attack. Would you believe a rocket propelled can of



Budweiser?

Macross marked the start of the modern anime 'look'. A feast of stunning visual style and film making, using an archetypal boy meets girl story, then mixing it with apocalyptic SF and superb character and mecha designs. By making the plot irrelevant in the same way that Howard Hawks did in The Big Sleep (with too much plot), and Jackie Chan did with City Hunter (with too little), it concentrated on making good scenes, creating a film that can be watched time and time again. Not only that, but in nicely letterboxed form, too! As a widescreen feature film, half of what is happening is lost on 4:3 ratio tv screen. So what can possibly go wrong? Well... unfortunately, the dubbing can. In fact it's pretty awful. The script and acting were done in Hong Kong and the English is stilted and unnatural, in places risibly so. However, none of this can detract from the gorgeous visuals, so just sit back, relax and enjoy. For perfectionists, Kiseki will also be releasing a sub-titled version later in the year if you can wait that long (the advantage of this dubbed version is the screen isn't cluttered up with writing and time isn't wasted reading it). In the United States, Carl Macek is working on an American dubbed version at the moment. Starting in August, Kiseki will also be releasing Robotech. As every fan should know, the first 36 episodes of this comprise an Americanised version of the Macross tv series - but this really is a story for another day...

JOHN SPENCER

Dear Helen McCarthy,

I'm reading issue 13. Most anime fans' knowledge is very high! I'm interested in YAMATO, RUPIN III and LOVELY SOLDIER SAILOR MOON. I'm crazy for Sailor Mars, Sailor Venus and Sailor Pluto! Therefore my comments will be biased.

Fred Patten's article in issue 13 shows that he knows Tezuka's works very well. The films he mentions are part of a 24-hour (or more) CHARITY PROGRAM which is very famous. If Fred comes to Japan, will he go to Tezuka's museum?

In Daniel Burgess's letter in issue 13, he mentioned anime phonocards. It's popular to collect phonocards in Japan. For a phonocard with an anime character the minimum price is around ¥1,000 (around £6) in JAPAN (in anime goods shops). If you have some used MERCURYCARD phonocards and you come to Japan, you'd better bring them with you because you can exchange them for some gifts with SAILOR MOON fans (now one of the most popular anime characters is SAILOR MERCURY!)

I will write a letter to this column from time to time.

MASAAKI KATO, Hokkaido, Japan

HELEN : *It's lovely to hear from one of our growing number of Japanese readers. Many thanks for your comments and we look forward to hearing from you again.*

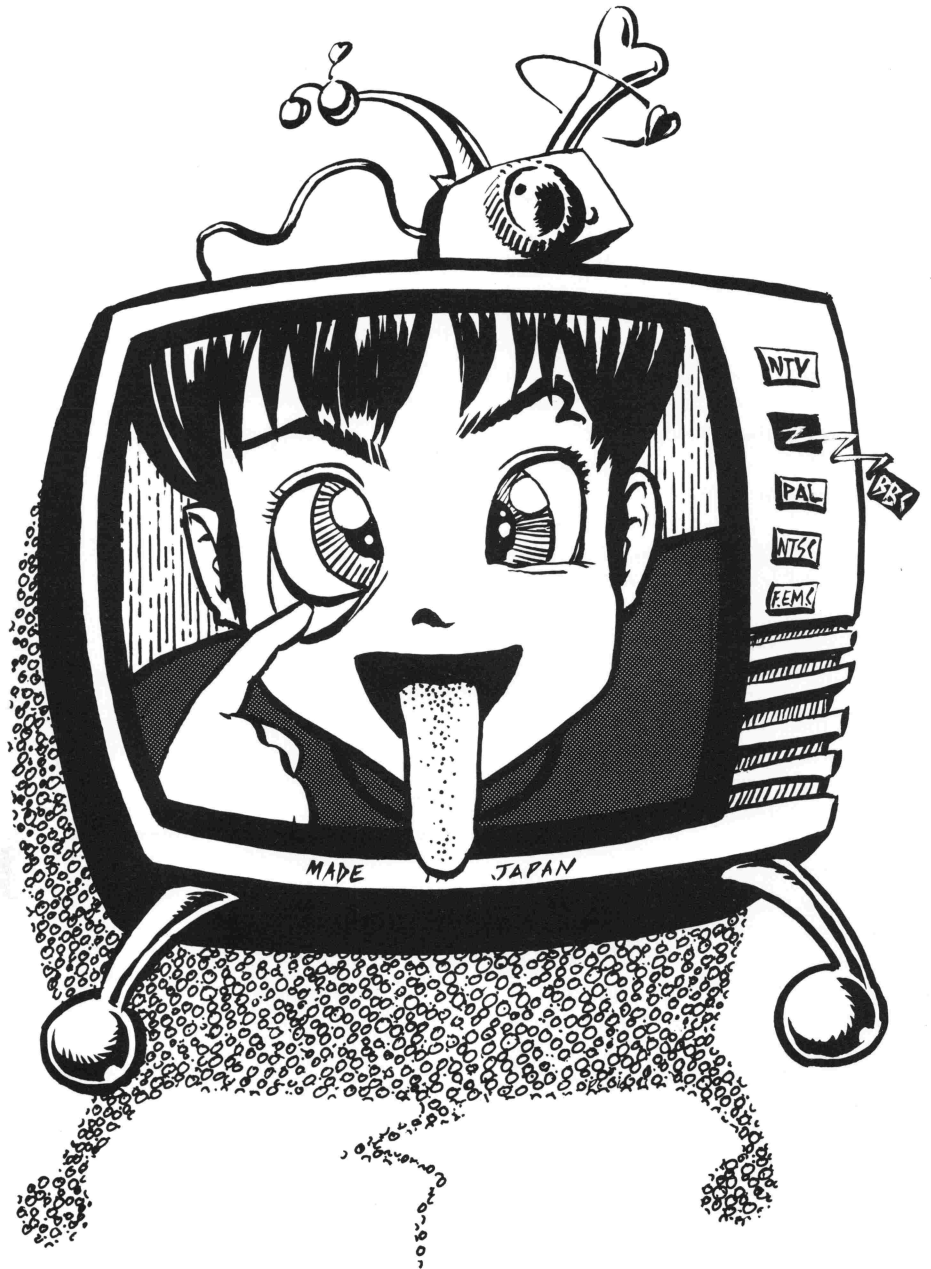
Dear Helen,

I feel an urge to write to comment on the letter from Martin Chan and your reply. While I agree that all new labels should be encouraged as much as possible, I do understand how Martin feels. I am sick of the stream of dubbed anime we are getting in the UK. I started by buying all releases from all labels, but as my awareness of anime grew and I saw some subtitled stuff, I have become more and more disillusioned with the UK commercial scene ie dubbed releases. My position now is that I refuse to buy any dubs. I just don't like them. I now get most of my anime from friends. I've even sold many Manga Videos I bought. I really want to support the UK anime industry but until it supports the anime I want I'll stick to subtitled releases.
GARETH PIDGEON, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England

Helen : *Some UK labels are now putting out subtitled releases; WESTERN CONNECTION has a forthcoming release list to make your mouth water and KISEKI are planning more subtitled releases subject to demand - plus, of course, our friends at ANIME PROJECTS who are still supporting subtitles. If more fans demand subtitles it will help to convince video companies that there is a large enough commercial demand to make it worth their*

animail

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while! But at least now it's getting easier for everyone to get a wide choice of different anime in the shops, which can only help make the general public more aware of the diversity anime has to offer.

Dear Helen,

Justin Palmer's letter in issue 14 reminded me of some odd "subliminal" frames to be found by the quick-witted in the interlude animation in the early RANMA 1/2 TV series and in the URUSEI YATSURA movie REMEMBER MY LOVE. The first can be seen in the sequence of Ranma juggling with animals, and the second, which appears to be a self-portrait of one of the animators, in the

sequence with Ataru on the pillion of Lahla's airbike. Anyone who has these on tape might like to go over them frame by frame and they'll see what I mean. As for BKO's evolutions with a pair of fans, this quaint reaction is often seen in Takahashi's manga stories and may even be some kind of folk dance! I don't doubt that many more curiosities are awaiting discovery in anime of all kinds.
Yours subliminally, PHIL LASKEY,
Warlingham, Surrey, England

Alright,

Who remembers watching TIZWAS, switching to SWOP SHOP for BATTLE OF THE PLANETS, then turning back for the rest of

TIZWAS and then STARFLEET after (that was Saturday morning telly!!)

Also, who remembers SAMURAI PIZZA CATS on NO. 73 (they only showed eps 1 to 13 and 52 were made).

Also, don't forget THUNDERBIRDS 2086 (TECHNOVOYAGER in Japan), SHERLOCK HOUND (Miyazakai helped on that series!!) and a few others that were shown over here - how about an article on all of these good ol' shows? And how come no TV company over here has "wised up" yet?

Trivia time - I remember when I first saw GUNBUSTER; it was when you could buy Reebok 'RX Trainer' shoes in sports shops (groan - sad but true). Also, anyone notice when they're building stuff in space, the large AIRFIX-like sprues floating around! Talking of noticing things, is it me or is the new Disney movie (The Lion King) a 100% rip-off of Osamu Tezuka's JUNGLE EMPEROR (aka KIMBA THE WHITE LION)?

I particularly like the art done for you by RUMI in a real nice shojo style! MORE PLEASE!!

SANDOKAN SOLOMON, St. Agnes, Cornwall, England.

Helen : *I'm going to see THE LION KING while we're in the States so I'll let you know how close I think it is to Tezuka-sensei's great work ...*

Dear Helen,

I've just gotten issue #14 and seen E. Bernhard Warg's comment that he wished I had included some of Harmony Gold's pre-Macek Japanese animation such as CAPTAIN HARLOCK AND THE QUEEN OF 1,000 YEARS, in my history of North American anime fandom.

But CAPTAIN HARLOCK AND THE QUEEN OF 1,000 YEARS was produced by Carl Macek after ROBOTECH! ROBOTECH was produced from November 1984 through March 1985, and it began TV syndicated broadcasting in March 1985. Due to its immediate popularity, Harmony Gold assigned Macek to begin production of CAPTAIN HARLOCK AND THE QUEEN OF 1,000 YEARS in May 1985. Some syndicated sales were made while it was in production, and broadcasting began immediately as soon as production was completed in November. CAPTAIN HARLOCK was not a success, and Harmony Gold did not produce any further Japanese TV cartoon series of this type.

I was concerned in my history of anime fandom with documenting important events and first events, not every single event. That is why I did not include all the minor Japanese anime titles that tried unsuccessfully to cash in on the popularity of STAR BLAZERS, VOLTRON and ROBOTECH, such as TRANZORZ, CAPTAIN HARLOCK AND THE QUEEN OF 1,000 YEARS, MACRON-1, and TEKKAMAN THE SPACE KNIGHT. For one thing, most of these were seen in so few

cities (TEKKAMAN was shown in less than ten cities throughout North America and Hawaii, as far as I could find out) that most anime fans who wanted to see them could not find them. For another, with the exception of CAPTAIN HARLOCK, they were produced by studios with the 'old' mentality that their Japanese origins should be disguised and they should be presented as typical American tv cartoons. So they were not really significant in promoting the awareness and popularity of anime among the public.

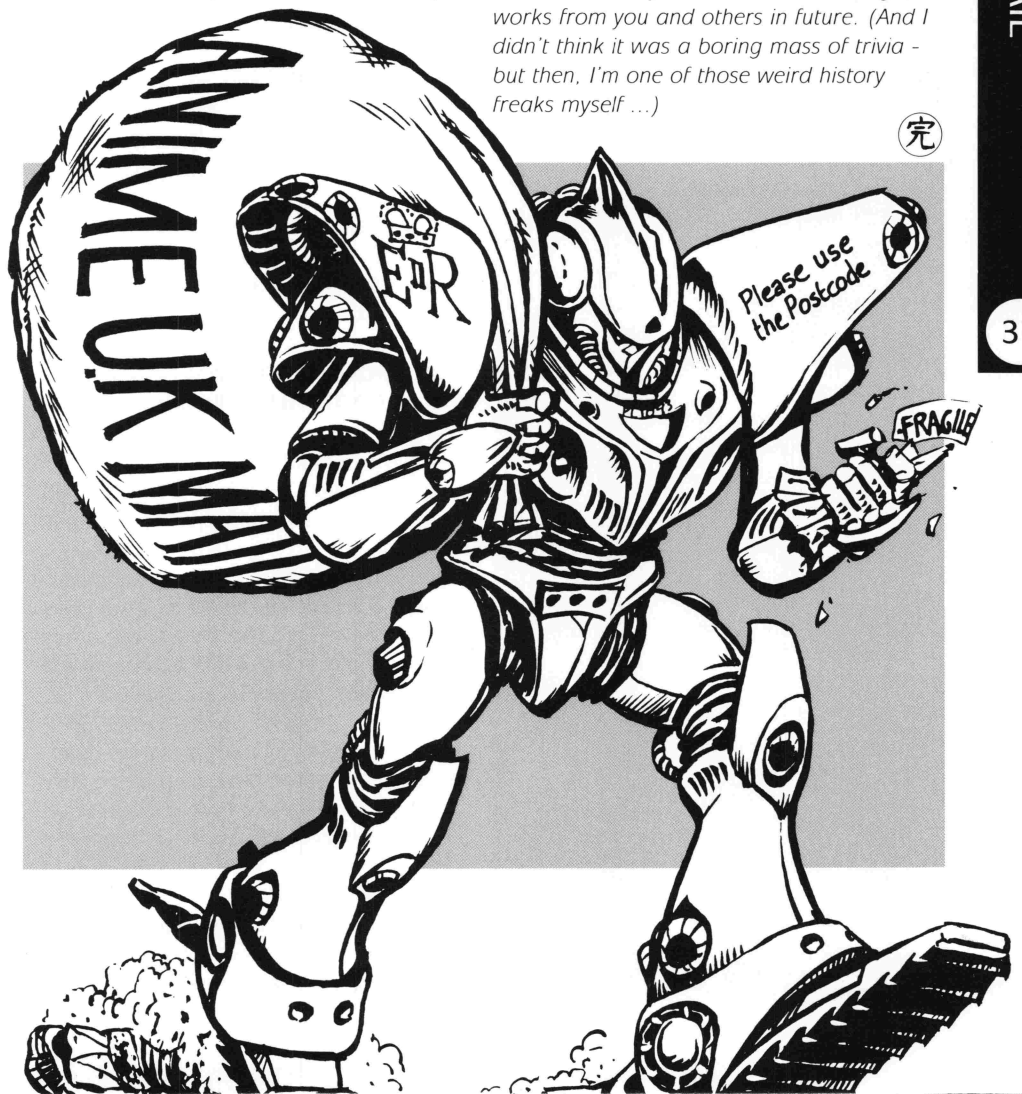
However, Warg is correct that there was some pre-Macek Japanese animation produced by Harmony Gold. But without Macek's knowhow as to how to present it to the public, Harmony Gold followed the trend of trying to remold Japanese anime into American juvenile cartoons. A couple of their adaptations, such as CAPTAIN FUTURE and MINKY MOMO (retitled THE MAGICAL ADVENTURES OF GIGI) did not sell and were not broadcast, and therefore they had no influence at all. (They were later dumped onto the home video market, to join the vast sea of kiddie-cartoon video titles that the public has never heard of before.) A Harmony Gold production of the Tatsunoko animated movie UNDERSEA ENCOUNTER (based very loosely on 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA) did get broadcast in several cities as an afternoon TV cartoon feature, before ROBOTECH. But here again, I did not try to include all of the Japanese cartoon features such as THE LITTLE NORSE PRINCE, JACK AND THE WITCH, PUSS IN BOOTS and TREASURE ISLAND (Toei Animation's funny-

animal version) which were shown in juvenile timeslots such as 'Saturday Afternoon at the Movies', hosted by a Skipper Frank or a Sherriff John or an Engineer Bill (to cite three of the most popular TV kiddie-cartoon hosts in Los Angeles from the 1960s through the 1980s). These cartoons never acknowledged their Japanese origins, and they were always mixed together with foreign fare such as the U.S.S.R.'s THE SNOW QUEEN and France's MR. WONDERBIRD, so even if anyone did realize that some of these were Japanese, the overall impact was to establish the composite as "foreign animation". Again, no real recognition or appreciation of anime resulted from these.

A really thorough history of the spread of anime in America and the evolution of anime fandom should document all of these. But I did not want to become engrossed in such minutiae that my chronology would bog down in ferreting out the most obscure dates, and grow so lengthy that it would become a boring mass of trivia. (Some have said that it's that already.)

Sincerely yours, FRED PATTEN, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

Helen: *As I said in the introduction to my own little overview of anime history, the problem is never what to put in, it's what to leave out! But even though your history of US anime fandom had to be kept fairly short and specific in its terms of reference, it's obviously started a train of thought and discussion that may lead to more and longer works from you and others in future. (And I didn't think it was a boring mass of trivia - but then, I'm one of those weird history freaks myself ...)*



CRISTINA GARCIA, CI RIOJA NUM 25 1^o-C, 28042 Madrid, SPAIN I want information about manga, anime and OVAs, and to exchange articles and material nonexistent in our respective countries! I'm Spanish, 20 years old and it's very difficult for me to write in English. (HELEN : *actually I thought Cristina's English was quite good!*)

MAURO MARONE, P.zza E. Grossi 5, 27026 Garlasco, Pavia, ITALY : I'm searching for American or English correspondents that love manga and anime like SAINT SEIYA, FIST OF THE NORTH STAR, MACROSS, ALITA, NADIA, LUPIN III, plus sword and sorcery, crime or science fiction books; please write to me in BLOCK LETTERS in English or Italian.

NICHOLAS G. FORESTER, Apt. 4, 3 Eastgate Street, Winchester, Hants., SO23 8EB, UK "I'd love to get in touch with more anime fanatics worldwide; Winchester is a little low on supplies of Otaku! I'm 21, play guitar, listen to most kinds of music, read fantasy and of course adore anime!"

ANDREW SCOTT, 401 Copley Close, Hanwell, London W7 1QQ, England; aged 17, would like penpals worldwide or local, male or female, to swap ideas and other odd bits. Favourite anime MACROSS II, DOMINION, GUNBUSTER, GUYVER. "So all you anime fans out there, get writing!"

MICHAEL ALAN MORRIS, 25 Grandison Street, Briton Ferry, Neath, West Glamorgan, SA11 2PG, Wales : "I am 18 years old, and would like to write to female penpals from all over the world. I'm a big fan of manga, enjoy music & play the guitar. All letters answered, so write soon!"

SANDOKAN "WILLY FOG" SOLOMON, Goshon Cottage, Mithian, St. Agnes, Cornwall, TR5 0QE, England : "Age 22, anime, manga, Japanese live action superhero fan and even bigger fan of BRB Internacional (Spanish animation company) andropomorphic series - so much so that I had my name changed to honor two of their series' main characters! Spanish contacts especially welcome - Willy Fog series 2 comes out this October everybody!!!"

KIM MARLO, 179 McNear Dr., San Rafael, CA 94901-1446, USA : Writer/musician, 25, would like to correspond with other anime/manga fans and exchange info, etc. Faves include AKIRA, ANGEL'S EGG, BATTLE ANGEL, BAOH, CAPTAIN HARLOCK, CYBER CITY, DESPERATE LOVE 1989, DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS, FIVE STAR STORIES etc etc Special interest in shojo manga/anime, Minami Ozaki and Amano.

BLAIR FORD, 8 Illawara Cres., Bayswater North, 3153 Melbourne, Australia; age 19, likes anything and everything anime, but main favourites are GUNBUSTER, VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU, NADIA and MACROSS THE MOVIE. "I love to draw manga also, so people all around the world, write!"

PEN PALS

FANSCENE

ROUNDUP

STARFLEET/X-BOMBER FANS TAKE

NOTE - further to Justin Palmer's letter last issue, PAUL ADDAE, 35 Paynels, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough PE2 5QN, tel. 0733 394783, is desperately trying to find other fans who might be able to help him get a look at the tv episodes of STARFLEET, and for general STARFLEET chat. If Shiro Hagen is your hero and Lamia turns you on, write to Paul now!

JUDGE ZONE is a new fanzine "for lovers of anime, by lovers of anime" which also has a social agenda - the editorial team aim over time to build up events like showings, group visits to conventions etc, to involve the readers in a growing network based round the zine. Issue 2 is out now and issue 3 follows soon at only 45p. For full details write to JUDGE ZONE, PO Box 5521, Newbury, Berks, RG14 5YE, or phone (0850) 530618 between 7-9pm.

Also on the new fanzine scene, **ANIMEFAN** (Super Fanatical Gaijin Anime Journal) is the brainchild of TEAM OTAKU and is available at 75p a copy from TIMBERWOLF PRODUCTIONS, c/o Apt. 4, 3 Eastgate Street, Winchester, Hants., SO23 8EB. Lots of game news, anime reviews, discussion and comment, all wrapped up in one passionately committed package. New artists, writers and readers all equally welcome, send ssae for info.

ANGEL'S BANE covers anime and manga as well as a continuing comic adventure; issues 1 and 2 now available at £1.00 inc. p&p. Editor Robert Self says "Any new work is welcomed and could be rewarded!" New writers and artists can send their work with an sase to Robert at 5 Wainsway, Perranporth, Cornwall, TR6 0HA, which is also the place to send your money for copies of the zine.

AUK-SPONSORED TEAM BANNED FROM FOOTBALL LEAGUE!

Manager Ben Isaacs was "gutted" when SOCCER STAR football league officials banned his team, LEGEND OF THE OVER-HIT CROSS FOOTBALL CLUB, sponsored by ANIME UK MAGAZINE, from their fantasy football league. The squad, made up of the most talented individuals on the anime scene, was rejected on the grounds that "this is a football game, not some wierd Japanese game." Star forward Captain Tsubasa said "This is pure racism. After all, we Japanese welcomed your Gary Lineker to our national league." He refuted rumours that the decision had anything to do with Devilman's habit of flying offside, claiming "The few recorded incidents occurred in the heat of the moment - Akka (as FUDO AKIRA is known to his mates) never meant to infringe the rules." Heart-throb of the back four Ryo Saeba added "It's a shame some of our ter-

rific younger players won't get the chance to show what they can do this season. Saotome is a genius on the pitch despite his reputation in the shower-room, and Arislan is the kind of winger you only see once in a generation."

The team is resigned to seeing Graviton City Stadium stand empty this year. But all is not necessarily lost! If YOU have a team that can't get a game, why not contact Ben and talk about setting up an anime league? Write to him at 54 Stacey Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF2 1DW. And if you want to play "straight" football without the taint of anything non-European, write to SOCCER STAR at Sherwood Games, 15 Annesley Rd., Hucknall, Notts NG15 7AD. Despite their treatment of his team, Ben Isaacs still generously describes them as "great". That's football for you!

Too late for review were **MANGAFFECT**, A Salter, Bryony Lodge, College Road; East Halton DN40 3PJ, £1.00; **BRITISH MANGA**, J Taylor, 95 Waverley Road, Harrow HA2 9RQ, £1.00; and **ANIMACE 4**, P Cook, 5 Brookland, Tiptree, Colchester, Essex CO5 0BU, £?.





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RETAIL ROUNDUP SPECIAL - ANIME EXPO

There were far too many dealers to list at ANIME EXPO - quite a few of them carrying over from last year, so we only list the newcomers here. (If you don't have last year's list, you need to order a back copy of issue 10; apart from one name change - ANIME KING to ANIME WINK - the list is unchanged.)

There had been some changes, though - far fewer dealers in cheap (\$5-10) cels and secondhand manga, and generally higher prices overall, although for some older shows like VOTOMS bargains could still be found. The sheer bulk of SAILOR MOON merchandise was staggering, and anything by Miyazaki remains a perennial favourite, though as yet the cute raccoons from his new film have made no appearance at a US convention. Buying by mail order from the USA isn't difficult. Three IRCs will cover postage on most catalogues, and don't forget to ask what form of payment your chosen retailer will

accept. You can buy US currency at any Bureau de Change or bank, but don't forget that cash must be sent by registered mail if you have to send it at all. International Money Orders are available from your post office, and for larger sums the cost is relatively modest. Credit cards go anywhere. Of course you can get round the money problem altogether by asking American pen-friends to send you stuff in exchange for stuff they want from Britain. (You haven't got an American penfriend? Shame on you! Turn to the Pen Pals column at once!)

BOOKS NIPPAN ANIMATION FANCLUB

US arm of Japanese chain, wide range of goods and discounts. Send an ssae and two IRCs to them at 1123 DOMINGUES STREET, UNIT K, CARSON, CA907463539, USA.

EX-CEL ANIMATION ART, 4182 Vitae Springs Rd.S. Salem, OR 97306, Internet 72135.1745@Compuserve.com, Compuserve 72135.1745, voice (503) 399 1766

.Cels by mail order, old and new shows.

GK-GEN, PO Box 741628, Los Angeles, CA 90004, internet ekawakam@scf.usc.edu
Garage kits - also welcome ORIGINAL new designs from scratchbuilders, write for details.

LASER DISC FAN CLUB, 1058 E. 230th St., Carson, CA 90745
Mail order LDs including some anime, many discounts (eg MOLDIVER 1 & 2 15% off each disc)

LASER DISC SAN FRANCISCO, 2415 Noriega St., San Francisco, CA 94122, tel (415) 661 3218

Laser disc sale, rental, mail order, part exchange, CDS, merchandise.

NAME THAT TOON, 8483 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles, CA, tel (213) 653 5633
Animation cels

PLANET ANIME, 2435 Times Blvd, TX, tel (713) 523 7122

Video, LD, CD, cels, merchandise
SUPER COLLECTOR, 16547 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708, tel (714) 839 3693

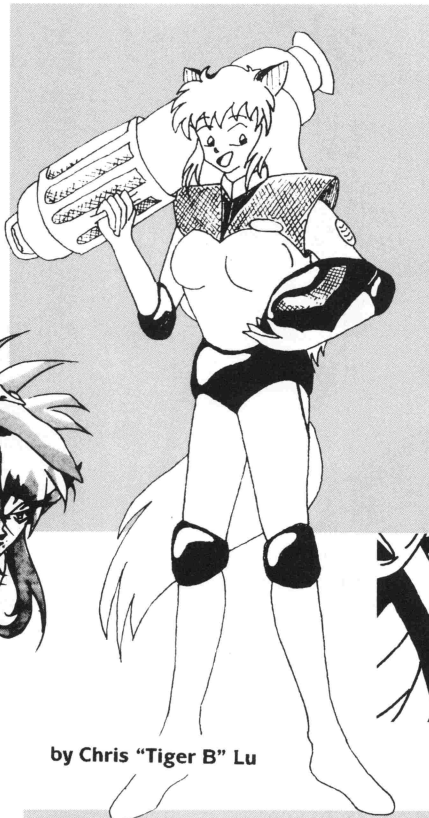
Animation/sf store, videos, LDs, CDs, merchandise.

WDCS/HARRY'S HOBBIES, 12020 Chapman Ave #180, Garden Grove, CA 92640

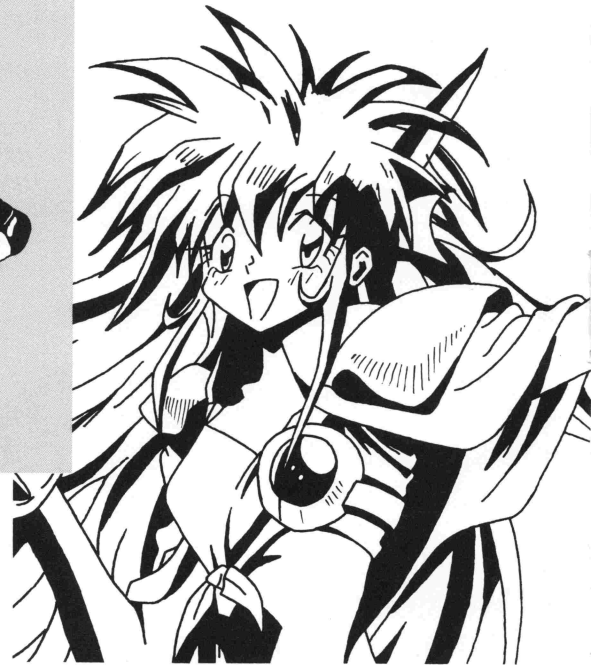
Anime kits, Trek & other media stuff, computer gear, games



by Autumn Robson

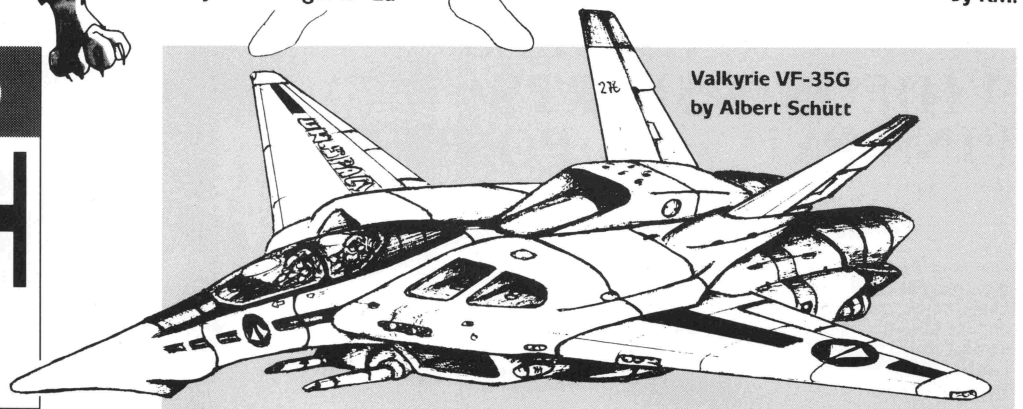


by Chris "Tiger B" Lu

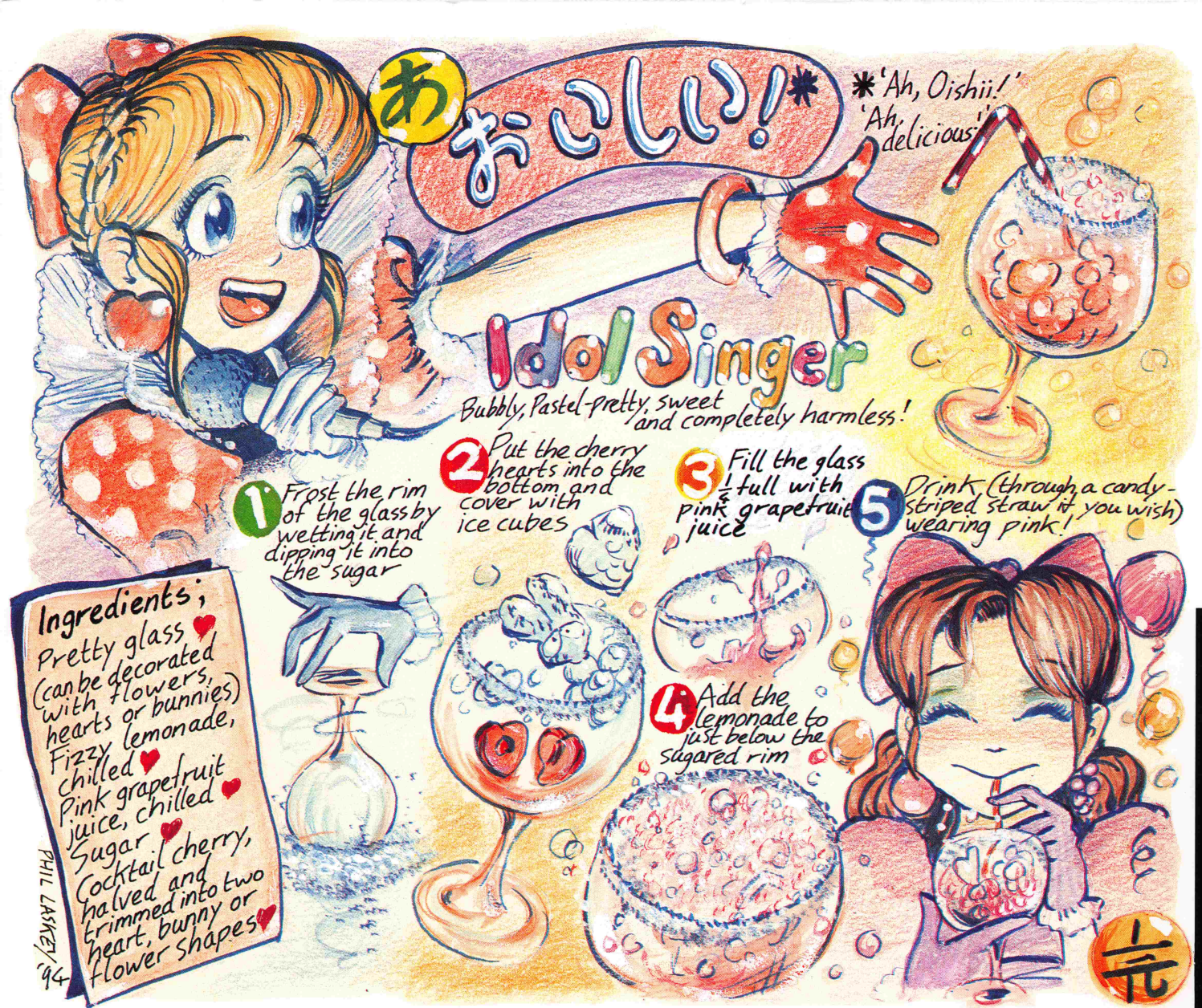


by KM!

anime
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Valkyrie VF-35G
by Albert Schütt



ネクスト イッシュュ →

コミック ANIME UK
MAGAZINE

MYSTIC WARRIORS

WINGS OF ONEAMIS

ART OF MANGA

ANIME GALLERY

IRIA - ZEIRAM THE ANIMATION. The success of the live-action film ZEIRAM led to the making of a sixpart animated OAV series named for the beautiful girl bounty hunter in the leading role. Part 1 came out in June, there'll be one part a month till November. To what your appetite, here's Iria with her quarry, the vicious, evil and truly ugly Zeiram.

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SURPRISE FOR FAN - RETURN OF AUK CENTREFOLD GIFT

